THE BEAVVTIES of BETH-EL.

Containing:

Sundry reaſons why euery *Chriſtian ought to account one* day in the courtes of God, *better then a thouſand* beſides.

Preached in Cambridge, and now publiſhed eſpecially for *the benefite of thoſe that* were the hearers.

AT LONDON
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1609.

To the right worſhipfull Maiſter FRENCH, Maior of the Towne of *Cambridge* and the reſt of the hearers of the Pariſh commonly called S^t. *Peters: Grace and all good* things.

RIGHT WORſhipfull and Chriſtian friendes, ſo ſoone as God gaue me a calling to become your teacher; I bethought mee which might bee the fitteſt courſe and carriage of my Miniſtrie, both for your beſt profit and mine owne diſcharge: and after a little deliberation, I eaſily reſolued of three thinges. 1. *to call you*

to a loue, and a cheerefull frequenting of the holy exercises of Religion in the house of God; by which as by a præface I entered into my labours, and this from the example of Dauid. *Psal.* 84. 10. 2. *to teach you how to behaue your selues being* present before God. *from the example of* Cornelius, *Act.* 10. 33. 3. *to preach Christ vnto you; which by Gods mercy I haue also performed out of* Peters *Sermon following frō* ver. 33. *to* 44. *Wherin I haue largely intreated of the most fundamental points of our Christian Religion: indeauoring in all these to approue my heart vnto the Lord, and my desire of your profiting euen to your selues. Of the first of these I haue here giuen you a further view and account; the other two depend one vpon the other, & containe a labour of longer time; besides that the eye of our experience hath seene what a surfet & lo-*

thing

thing this our age hath taken of ſound practical diuinity: *& therefore onely thus much I haue preſumed for your ſakes to publiſh, to the purpoſe that each of your families might haue a coppy for the helping of your memories; not intending any further view of clearer light. But if the Printers haue ouer-intreated me to make the benefit (as they tearmed it) more common; then I ſhall deſire of ſuch as for whome theſe thinges were not principally prepared, the forbearance of any curious cenſure, ſeeing it was plainly fitted and preached vnto a plaine auditory, and not intended to behold ſuch an open light. Wherein yet it may afford this vſe, that being a ſubiect in which I haue obſerued none going before me by way of treatiſe; it may yeeld both occaſions and groundes to ſome more able inſtrument to inlarge and adorne ſo neceſſary and ſo profitable*

an argument. Which heartily I wish; the rather, because in these desolate daies of ours, these beauties of Gods house, *are by so many men, & so many meanes obscured, as that nũbers giuen-ouer to Atheisme and liberty, are bold not onely to moue (which were too much) but strongly defend that our Saboth is either not to be kept, or not so straightly: that either our Sermons neede not to bee heard or not so frequently: & that to walk according to the light here shining, at least so* accurately *& strictly as the Apostle prescribeth, is too much precisenes: the which with sundry other disguised conceites of vayne men, if they shall preuaile so far as they threaten, surely our* Bethels *in shorte time will become* Bethavens; *our houses of God, dens of theeues, and the voice of our Church will be no other then that of* Naomi. Call mee no more beautifull;

Ephe. 5. 15 ἀκριβῶς.

Ruth. 1. 20

for

for why ſhould yee call me ſo, ſeeing the Lord hath humbled mee, and the almighty hath brought mee vnto aduerſity, *how glorious a worke thē would it be to ioyne in the preſeruing of the beauty of the kingdome of* Ieſus Chriſt? *and that not by any artificiall paynting of the face of this chaſte ſpouſe (for that is fitter for the* Romiſh *Harlot*) *but by a plaine manifeſtation of her owne face and natiue beauty out of the word, which preferreth her beauty before that of the* Roſe of the field, Cant. 2. 1 *and the* Lilly of the vallies, *and affirmeth that the* Lilly among the thornes *doth not ſo ſurpaſſe in beauty as* ſhe doth among the daughters. *Surely ſuch a glorious worke as this ſhal not want a glorious reward. But to returne to you ỹ hearers, theſe briefe notes being properly yours, to you they are of right airected as a teſtymony of my loue and inward affection*

fection vnto you: the which (if the Lord had thought meet) I desirously would haue still testified by voice among you, rather then by this my writing: by which I recommend these few lessons to your Godly learning, and my self vnto your praiers.

Yours in the Lord.

THOMAS TAYLOR.

Christian reader seeing that partly by the vnacquaintance of the workeman with my hand, and partly by the ouersight of the Corrector, some faults are escaped, I haue noted such as chiefly alter the sence, leauing the other to thine owne humanity, and curtesie to correct.

Page 8 line 24, for ruthes read ruines. p. 15. put out of the margent Vie 1. p. 16. 24, for ayrie r. straite. p, 18, 1, for their, r these, p, 19, 22, put out in. p, 21, 7, put out and. p. 29, 23, for caules, r. coates p, 31, 1, for fortified, r forfeyted, p, 60, 11, for couering, r couenant, p, 65, vlt, and 66, 15, for perfection, in both places, r. protection, pa, 71, 22, for there, r. the, pa, 225, 19, for truth, r, tents & l. 20, for countries, r. courteyns

Pſal. 84. 10.

For a day in thy courts is better then a thouſand: I had rather bee a doore keeper in the houſe of my God, then to dwell in the tabernacles of wickedneſſe.

THE Prophet *Dauid* being through the practiſe and tirannie of his enemies debarred frō all acceſſe vnto the publick worſhip & ſeruice of God, amongſt the reſt of the people of God, he maketh a mournfull and greeuous complaint of this his baniſhment, in the former part of this Pſalme, accounting his eſtate in this regarde, more miſerable then ſome of the bruite creatures themſelues, which had liberty to build their neſts, and lay their young neere the altars of the Lord, which benefit now he was depri- Verſe. 3.
ued of. And recounting with himſelfe the condition of ſuch perſons as then enioyed thoſe liberties & priuiledges,

hee pronounceth vpon them one bleſſedneſſe in the neck of another; yea if with much inconuenience, through drought and wet, which are ſignified by the *valley of Mulberries*, and the *raine couering the pooles*; yea with much toile and difficulty they could enioy ſuch an earthly happineſſe. In the ſecond part of the Pſalme, hee lifteth vp an earneſt requeſt vnto the Lord, to turne his *eare*, *verſ.*8. and his *eye* vnto him, *verſ* 9. that ſo he would be pleaſed to draw him out of this neceſſitie: of which prayer this verſe containeth one reaſon. In which conſider two things; firſt the *meaning*, ſecond the *doctrines*.

Verſ. 4. 5.

Verſ. 7. 8.

The meaning.

Firſt by the *Courts* of God, and *the houſe* of GOD, is meant all one thing: And although by the houſe of God is meant ſome-time the Church *triumphant*, Iohn 14.2. *In my fathers houſe are many manſions*, that is, in heauen where the Saints enioy the preſence of GOD: and ſome-times the Church *Militant*, 1. *Tim.* 3. 15. *That thou mayeſt know how to behaue thy ſelfe in the houſe of God, which is the Church*

of

of the liuing God. Yet here is it taken in neither of thoſe ſences, but more ſpecially ſignifieth ſuch a part of the Church militant, as where Gods people haue obtained liberty and freedome to worſhip God purely; ioyning together in the confeſſion of their ſinnes, and of their faith, in hearing the worde, receiuing the Sacraments, publicke prayers, &c. Thus *Salomon* calleth the Temple the houſe of GOD almoſt twentie times, in 1. Kings 8.

Thus *Dauid* here calleth the tabernacle, firſt the *Courts of God*, alluding to the ſtately courts of Kings, in which were ſundry courts, and among them one for the people to aſſemble into, ſeperate from the Sanctuarie: and ſecondly *the houſe of God.* Exo. 29. 45

Firſt becauſe herein the Lord had promiſed to dwell among his people, euen as a man dwells in his houſe continually. For which cauſe the Arke, (a ſigne of his preſence) was ſet in the Sanctuarie, which the Lord calleth by his owne name; *Ioſhua* 4, *verſ.* 13. Fortie thouſand went *before the Lord*

to battle againſt *Iericho*, that is before the Arke of the Lord. 2. becauſe hee eſpecially reueiled himſelfe here, and gaue ſpeciall teſtimony of his preſence vnto ſuch as purely ſought him, in ẏ exercciſes of his worſhip. For where can a man be either ſooner or ſurelier found then at his owne houſe? hence was the place of Gods worſhip called the *face of God*, which wee are commanded to *ſeeke*, from which *Caine was caſt out*. Not that in ſuch places were any falſe vizors or formes whereby God might bee remembred: but becauſe his pure worſhip, præſcribed by himſelfe, and accordingly by his children performed, is that ordinance, in which his face is ſeene glorious, and not out of it.

Pſal. 27 8.

Gen 4. 14

In this *Court* of God, in this *houſe* of God, *Dauid* wiſhed hee might alwayes dwell, and that neither 1. *vnaduiſedly*, as *Peter* in Chriſts tranſfiguration. *Maiſter it is good being here: let vs make three tabernacles: but hee wiſt not what he ſaid.* Neither 2. *formally* or for faſhion, but moſt affectionately: yea ſo ardently that the very vehemencie of his deſire, conflicting with deniall of it,

Luk. 9. 33.

brought

brought leanneſſe into his fleſh, dryneſſe into his bones, and conſumption into his parts; for ſo much the word נבלה in the ſecond verſe implyeth; that he was euen waſted with the ſighing & groning out theſe moſt inward deſires of his ſoule: nor yet 3. doth he propoũd his wiſh in ſimple forme of ſpeach, for that would not ſerue him to expreſſe more then ordinary affectiõ: but as one moſt ſuperlatiuely affecting aboue all other things this one; he inſtituteth a double compariſon. The *former* is drawne from the conſideration of the time. *One day* ſpent in theſe Courts of GOD, is better then a *thouſand* elſewhere: as though he had ſaid. It were no great difficulty for me being a King and the head of all *Iſraell*, to paſſe the whole terme of my life in the Pallaces of the mighty, and in aboundance of earthly pleaſure; If I could (with the moſt of the world) account theſe the matters of higheſt honor, and trueſt happineſſe. But might I obtaine *one day*, that is, neuer ſo little a time of the daies of my pilgrimage within thy Courts & tabernacle: where with the reſt of thy

people I might ioyne in ỳ pure worſhip of thy name; I would account my ſelfe more honorable & happy, then to ſpend thouſands of dayes in the company of the prophane, although neuer ſo great. The latter compariſon is drawne from conſideration of the eſtate & condition of men: of whom ſome are in eminent place and dignity, ſome in meaner and baſer degree. *Dauid* although he had good experience of both: yet with all his ſoule, hee would make exchange of all his greatneſſe & glory, with a meane and contemptible outward eſtate; ſo be hee might enioy God in his ordinance with it. And therefore although he was a king, yet all that greatneſſe did not ſo take vp his heart, neither lift it vp: but that he could be contẽted, nay deſirous to be *a doore-keeper in the houſe of God, rather then to dwell in the tabernacles of wickedneſſe*; reſoluing that he would rather hold the meaneſt roome in the tabernacle; then without it to poſſeſſe the higheſt place of the earth: for where Gods tabernacle is not, there can be nothing but tabernacles of wickedneſſe. It may be true here which ſome lerned obſerue, that *Dauid* in mention of a *doore-*

keeper

keeper in Gods house, had respect vnto the *Chorits*, to whose custody this psalm was comitted for their incouragemẽt against the contempt of lewd men: but whether he had or no, their office being to keepe the doores of the tabernacle, the truth is, he ỹ had preferred the very sparrows and swallows aboue himselfe, in this regard that they might resort to the tabernacle, & make their nests there; did much more account the *Chorites* far more happie then himselfe, because they by their office were tied to be euer, day & night in their courses about the tabernacle: ỹ priuiledge himselfe in this his flight (whether before *Saul* or *Absolon*) could not enioy. Thus the Prophet enforceth his request and petition vnto God: that therefore he would please to vouchsafe him a comfortable returne vnto the holy exercises of religion, that he might pertake in the publick duties thereof with his people: because hee accounteth this blessing the greatest happines vpõ earth, yea next to heauen it selfe, although 1. *neuer so little a while*. 2. *in neuer so meane a condition*. So much of the meaning: the instructions follow. It is *a note of a good heart, to account the wante*

1. Chr. 9. 17 & cap. 26. 1

Doctr. 1.

The want of the word moſt lamentable of al wants.

of the word and miniſtery, the greateſt want and heuieſt burthen of al other. Dauid for ſuch affections was called a man after *Gods owne hart:* ſo earneſt and ſo frequẽt they were with him: in *Pſal.* 27. 4. he was in many wants, was driuen from houſe and home, yea deſtitute of all earthly comforts: yet he felt none of thẽ in comparriſon, neither wiſhed the ſupply of any of them: But *one thing* he wanted, which he *deſired of the Lord*, euen that hee might *dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the daies of his life, to behold the beauty of the Lord & to viſit his temple.* And this was not ſo peculiar vnto this man of God; but that it is cõmon alſo with other ſ Saints of God. *Ieremy* bewailing ſ eſtate of the Iewes in captiuity, beginneth his lamentatiõ there where was greateſt matter of mourning. *The waies of* Sion *lament becauſe no man commeth to the ſolemne feaſtes, all her gates are deſolate, her prieſts ſigh:* Infinite were the ruths which were vpon the citty beſides, in al that eighteen monthes while the ſiege continued, as plague; famine, in which the pittifull *women were glad to ſeeth and eat their*

Lamen. 1. 4.

fruite

fruite, and children of a ſpan long : and wherin thoſe that were *arraied in ſcarlet were glad to imbrace the dung*: much more lamentable was that blood-ſhed when *Ieruſalem* was taken, the Kinges ſon ſlaine before his face; yea the King him-ſelfe taken, his eies put out, his feet put in fetters, and him-ſelfe carried to *Babel*. Infinite and vnſpeakable was the loſſe both of the Cittie & Temple, when both of them were burnt downe, almoſt to the ground: and yet the Prophet conceiuing of theſe as farre leſſer euils, mentioneth none of them, vntill he hath groned out moſt pittifull complaints, for that the worſhip of GOD was ceaſed among his people, and that which was a place of Gods preſence, & delight; was now become a den of heatheniſh Idolatry. The like wee ſee in *Daniel*, who when by reading in books he vnderſtood that the terme of this captiuity was accompliſhed: he turned his face vnto the Lord, and ſought by prayer, and ſupplication with faſting, & ſack-cloth and aſhes; that the Lord would turne away his anger, and wrath from the Citty of *Ieruſalem*, and in that long

Joſephus. antiq. Iud. lib. decimo. cap. decimo.

Ier. 52. 6. 11. 13.

Dan. 9. 1. 2. 16.

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long prayer hee intreateth not, that he with his people might bee returned into their former poſſeſſions and inioy their houſes, landes, orchards, vineyards and commodities: but the greateſt loſſe of all ſeemed to eat vp all the remembrance of theſe, euen the fayling of Gods publike worſhip amongſt them; this was wholy in his eie, and this took vp all his requeſts. He prayeth indeed for the Cittie *Ieruſalem:* But becauſe it was *Gods holy mountaine* Verſ. 16. and becauſe it was the Cittie where-vpon his *name* was called. *Verſ.* 18. 19. yea herein he could neither contain, nor yet ſcarce expreſſe his feruency, but with ſtrong cryes intreated the Lord, *for the Lords ſake*, that is, for his Chriſt ſake, he would *cauſe his face to ſhine vppon his ſanctuary* which then *lay waſte:* and this may be obſerued not onely in the Prophets of the Lord, but alſo in the Lords people, who, how-ſoeuer before their captiuities it was hard to ſay whether they more deſpiſed Gods holy ordinances, or imbraced their outward profits; yet in their afflictions & wandrings in ſtrange countries, the Lord taught them

them this wisdom: that they looked not so much to their land and country as to the Temple, to *Ierusalem*, to *Sion*. Psal. 137. 1. 5. 9.

Now who can deny that those are good hearts which are thus disposed, for 1. they are such as highly prize, and worthyly esteem these ordinances of God, as the holy meanes to beget and confirm faith in the soules of beleeuers, yea the meanes whereby ordinarily the fellowship of the Saints with God, and their mutuall Communion one with an other is heere begun in the Kingdome of grace, and shall be perfected in the Kingdome of glory. 2. they are such as see the necessity of Gods ordinances in the Ministry: in the want of w^ch, people *must needs perish*; as such as want both ȳ rule and guide to direct & lead them vnto true felicity. 3. They are such as haue tasted (in som measure) how sweet ȳ Lord is in these ordinãces; or els could they neuer thirst after the liuing God: they haue met with God in *Sion* who hath enlightned their minds, perswaded their harts; cõforted their consciences; furnished thẽ with coat-armor of proof, against satans subtilties and batteries, fortified

Why a good heart to esteemeth it.

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fortified them againſt their owne weakneſſes, ſupplyed them with preſeruatiues againſt the poiſon of euill example, which as a corrupt ayer infecteth not a few: beutified them with the graces of faith, hope, loue, humilitie, patience, ſobriety and the reſt, clothed thē with the righteouſnes of Chriſt whom their faith hath claſped and wil not let go, in compariſon of whom al gain is loſſe, and al abundance meer neceſſity and beggery.

Vſe. 1. Vnder valuers of the word reproued.

This doctrine ſerueth to reproue a nūber of men who account of the word and the miniſtry of it ſo meanly, as the things which they can be beſt without: and therfore where God in mercy hath vouchſafed them, many eſteem of them as a ſixt fingar, a ſuperfluity, a burden: & ſpeake of them as the vnthankful *Iſraelites* of Mannah: *we ſee nothing but this Mannah*: there is too much preaching, and what ſhould ſo much of it do? And againe where God in iudgement hath denied this bleſſing of a faithful Miniſtery vnto a people, it is neuer aſked after: but in many ignorant townes and pariſhes, ſcarce ſhal we heare of a man that

that ſtirres vp himſelfe to ſeeke after God. In the want of neuer ſo baſe an outward commodity, men can complaine, yea and lay their counſels and purſes together, to get their want ſupplied in ſeaſon. Hence is it that men are much in ſuch complaints. Oh we want ſuch a commoditie in our country, ſuch a benefit in our pariſh, ſuch a neceſſary in our houſes, and will be diligent with much money to redeeme it! but neuer a word of the want of inſtruction, of the want of a painfull teacher, of the want of the knowledge of God, of the want of the practiſe of piety either in the pariſh, or in the familie. Which argueth the fleſhlineſſe of mens hearts, which in their deſires can ſoare no higher then earth and things below. A pitifull thing it is that in the dayes of ſuch grace, a man may ride ſo many miles together, and behold ſo many people as ſheepe diſperſed without faithfull ſhepheards, to bring them into the folde of Chriſt, or as ſo many goodly fields ready and white vnto the harueſt, and yet ſcarce any labourer to inn them, and bring them into the barne

of

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of Christ: of whom a mã may say, to the sorrow of his soule, as Christ of *Ierusalem*, ỳ the things of *their peace are hid* from their eies: & further many who are not without all knowledge not the meanes, but take themselues to haue better part in Christ then the former, may here finde the vnsoundnesse of their soules: for many reputed christians because they are not only within the visible church, but pertak also in al the outward exercises of religiõ, hear the word read, preached, receiue the sacraments, contẽt themselues in these works done, without any great inward affection to any of them: men they are of great indifferency; if they be vnder the ministery, they see good reason to submit their outward man vnto it, & to giue it now and then some good words, and vpon occasion a meals meat: if it were absent they could also vppon short warning frame themselues to indifferency, & carry the matter without much impatiẽce: ẅ if euer they had intertained in such affection as they that haue tasted the sweetnes of God in it; they would wish to want the aire to breath in as soon

as

as theſe ſweet meanes no leſſe neceſſary to a comfortable chriſtian life then the aire to a natural.

To ſuch men therfore I ſay, that lette them make what profeſſion they wil; let them reioice in the peace and liberty of the church: if in the church inioying the word and exerciſes of religion thou priz'ſt any thing in the world aboue them in thy affection; yea if any thing be ſo ſweet vnto thy taſte as theſe bee; thou now by vnder-valuing theſe vnvaluable priuiledges of Gods people declareſt thy ſelfe (for all thy profeſſion) to bee no better then cockle in the field, or chaffe on the floore of Chriſt. And againe if in the want of theſe holy ordinances of GOD; thou eſteemeſt not (with *Dauid*) that the greateſt want is vppon thee that can befall thee; thou art but an vnſound member; yea rotten at the coare of thy heart. *Vſe.* 1.

This doctrine teacheth further ẏ it is a iuſt cauſe of mourning when the word & Miniſtery either decay amongſt any people or are interrupted, for this bringeth *Vſe.* 2. Lament the want of the word abroad.

bringeth the greateſt want that any people can be expoſed vnto: the diſſoluing of the miniſtrie is the peoples decay, Prou. 29 18. *Where viſion faileth, people periſh.* Hoſee. 4. 6. *My people are deſtroyed for want of knowledge.* Can there be any greater loſſe then the loſſe of a mans ſoule? or can there bee a greater want then for a man to be ſtarued to death? or if this loſſe, this want, be brought vpon any man, can any recompence bee made vnto ſuch a party anſwerable vnto either? what a griefe then ſhould it bee to a godly heart to ſee whole townes lye vnder that curſe of God, Amos 8. 11. euen vnder a *famine, not of bread and water, but of hearing the word of the Lord*? for although religion and exerciſes of it bee ſafe in the places where wee dwell, yet if the abſence of it elſe-where greeue vs not, we lay not to heart the diſtreſſes of Gods people as we ought, our bowels are too ayery, wee are too priuatly minded, and further if we heare or ſee any faithfull miniſtrie interrupted, wee muſt lament that the free paſſage of the Goſpell is hindered: that that meanes where-

wherein the Lord conueyeth all his goodneſſe into faithfull ſoules is taken away, and ſo a doore opened to all iniquitie: yea a flood-gate vnto all impiety. If any mans outward eſtate were broken, his wealth by force and violence ſnatched out of his hands, here would be ſence and ſorrow (more then inough) for the loſſe: ſhall then thy inward ſtate be crackt? the liberties of the miniſterie, and of the aſſemblies be infringed? the ſanctuarie of God deſolate? the exerciſe of pure religion together with Gods worſhip be hindred or aboliſhed, and all this cauſe no ſorrow, nor ſet any griefe to thy heart? Is this ſuch a diſpoſitiõ as becommeth him who profeſſeth himſelfe to be the Lords? no ſurely: for ſuch (as they haue cauſe) fill their mouthes with complaints of the deſolations of *Sion*. Pſal. 79. 1. A iuſt cauſe of ſorrow was it to *Dauid*, when he *ſaw the enemie lift vp axes, and hammers to breake downe the carued worke of the Sanctuarie*. As iuſt a cauſe when ſuch a man as *Ioſeph* ſhall be euill intreated, who hath beene a meanes to releeue a whole towne in the time of 10 & 74. 1. 2. 6.

famine. If at any time by their or ſuch other meanes *Sion* ſhall ſit in the duſt; the childen of the Church muſt ſhew their compaſſion in their mothers miſerie, weeping when ſhee weepeth, and no more bee able to reioyce in her ſorrow, then the Iewes could compoſe themſelues to ſing *Hebrew ſongs* in *Babilon*, when they *remembred Sion*. Pſal. 137.

Eli a good old man (notwithſtanding his weakneſſe towards his ſonnes) when the Arke was carried to the battaile againſt the *Philiſtines*, it is ſaid his *heart feared for the Arke of God*, (1. Sam. 4. 13.) and when tidings came that the battaile went againſt *Iſraell*, that *Hophni* & *Phineas* his ſonnes were ſlaine and the Arke taken: it is ſayd when he heard of the Arke he fell from his ſeate and brake his neck: it was not the ſorrow for his ſonnes, but for the Arke that brake his heart, that it failed him. Hee had likewiſe a good daughter in law *Phineas* his wife, who when ſhe heard of all theſe tidings, the text noteth alſo of her, that it was not the death of her father, her brother, nor her owne husband all at once, ỹ ſo went to her heart: but this was it which her

minde

minde and tongue ranne vpon, and made her refuſe all comfort; becauſe the Arke of God was taken, and the glory was departed frō *Iſrael. verſ.* 21.

The like is worthy noting in that faithfull Captaine *Vriah*, who when he was called and commanded by *Dauid* to goe home and eate and drinke and company with his wife, hee vtterly refuſed, becauſe the Arke, and *Iſraell* and *Iudah* were in tents, and his Lord *Ioab* and his ſeruants in the open fields: and therefore hee could take no delight in any thing at home, becauſe it was not well with the Arke and *Iſraell* abroad. 2.Sam.11.11. Euen ſo ſhould wee neuer thinke our ſelues well, when it is not well with the Church, nor when the Goſpell runneth not with free paſſage: which conſideration ſhould abate much of our preſent carnall reioyſing in, as it did in worthy *Vriah*.

Daniel was well enough, highly in fauour with the King, had libertie of conſcience euen in that Idolatrous kingdome, to worſhip the GOD of *Iſrael* purely, he was in no bondage nor affliction: but yet ſo long as GODS people were in calamitie

Gods temple in desolation, Gods worship in contempt, he could not but sorrow, fast and pray in their behalfe. The like wee read recorded of that faithfull captaine *Nehemiah*, he was a great man in the Court of King *Artaxerxes*, in an office very honorable and neere the Kings person, for he was his Cup-bearer; yet when enquiring of his people, he found they were in great misery and reproche, and that the wall of *Ierusalem* was broken downe, and the gates of it burned with fire, his zeale stirred vp exceeding sorrow, euen such as hee could not hide, but that the King (before whom no mournefull spectacle might come) did read the deepe sorrow of his heart in his countenance: his owne aduancement and honour could not comfort him, so long as hee saw God dishonored abroad, the Citie dedicated to his name, now defaced by Heathen Princes: that religion which by himselfe was prescribed to serue him by, now decayed, and that people which was his owne peculiar, now to become seruants to strange Lords. *Nehem.* 1. wherein wee read our owne lesson,

that

that our ſelues enioying the pretious libertie of our aſſemblies, we ought to pitty the diſtreſſe of our countrymen, who ſit ſtill in the ſhadow of death, & by our prayers and beſt meanes, to releeue them, groning out the deſires of our hearts, and that all *Iſraell*, euen in our owne country, might be ſaued.

Thirdly, if the want of the word, and exerciſes of it, be the greateſt want of all other: then ſuch as haue it muſt be wiſe hearted to make precious account of it: and while they enioy it, ſtore them-ſelues with ſuch neceſſaries as ſhall after-wards beſteed them. Men are not ſo careleſſe as to forget or fore-ſlack their markets vpon the market day: neither neede many ſpurres to reſerue ſome-thing (as wee ſay) againſt a rainie day. 3. Vſe. Make much of the miniſterie ſetled.

Why then doe not ſuch as profeſſe themſelues the children of wiſdome, fore-caſt and prouidently fore-ſee their future neceſſities? eſpecially ſeeing this ouer-ſight will coſt them ſo many teares, ſo much ſorrow as their ſpirits ſhall ſcarce bee able to ſuſtaine them. How is it that we haue not the wiſdom

of men in vs? to say within our selues, a rainie day may be vpon vs or euer we be aware: it may be the sorrows of our mother the Church are not farre off: perhaps a famine of the word; a want of the ministerie; a black darknesse like that of *Ægipt* is neerer vs then we thinke off. For we haue seene as bright gleames as ours ouer-cast: yea as cleare sunnes of the Church set and fallen in the firmament, as that in the light of which wee now walke: witnesse the Churches of *Rome*, *Corinth*, *Galatia*, *Ephesus*, *Philippi*, the seauen Churches in lesser *Asia*, all which were farre afore vs in the Gospell: but now vnder the Turke and Pope are sunke to hell, in the profession of *Mahometisme* and *Antichristianisme*: yea of golden Candlesticks which once held out the glorious Gospell and word of truth, are become the very cells and dennes of diuells. Or if the Lord for his owne name and truths sake, forbeare the remooving of our Candle-sticke, yet the sorrowes of mine owne soule may come vpon mee, as the trauell of a woman: the Lord may let loose, and set

my

my ſinnes in order before mee to the breaking of my heart; and vexe mee with fearefull viſions: or elſe ſickneſſe may aſſaile mee, and bring mee downe to the gates of death; my owne deaths day, and conſequently my iudgement day is at doore, and cannot bee farre off. Let now euery Chriſtian well bethinke himſelfe, whether in any of theſe ſtraites hee ſhall not need oyle in his lampe: whether hee ſhall haue no vſe of faith, of direction, of comfort, of patience, of ſence of Gods loue, of aſſurance of pardon of his ſinne, of ſtrength againſt ſuch temptations, as hee (perhaps) neuer buckled withall before. I aſſure thee that which thy owne experience ſhall at that time become thy miſtreſſe in: that whenſoeuer the Lord ſhall begirt thee, and lead thee into any of theſe conditions; if the word bee not thy comfort, thou art ſure to periſh in thy trouble; and that all thy life had beene time little enough, to haue furniſhed thy ſelfe againſt that day, yea if thou hadſt begun to bee heauenly couetous, when thou beganſt firſt to breath.

Wouldeſt thou then be armed againſt ſinne, ſuperſtition, hereſie, popery in thy life time; and cloſe vp thine eyes in that holy religion of GOD which thou haſt learned, and beene brought vp in: yea if times and religion ſhould alter? Wouldeſt thou not in the day of thy ſorrow be found vnfurniſhed, and nakedly layde open to all terrors of conſcience, accuſations of ſinne, and temptations of Sathan? Wouldeſt thou not bee giuen vp to impatience, to a ſence of Gods wrath, to ſhutte vp thy dayes in an horrible apprehenſion of an hell in thy ſoule afore-hand? Oh then now while God offereth his grace in the miniſterie of the word, acknowledge the acceptable time and day of ſaluation: laye holde vpon wiſdome while ſhee calleth; giue her anſwer while ſhee yet knocketh; open the doore of thy heart, to giue the beſt enterteinment thou canſt to this deare Daughter of GOD: Store thy ſoule with knowledge; but eſpecially with faith and good conſcience.

Make roome in the houſe of thy heart,

hart by remouing all the traſh in it, ſuch as is infidelity, impenitency, earthlyneſſe, voluptuouſnes. and whatſoeuer ſauoureth of the fleſh: then lay vp in it prouiſion for thy neceſſity; that it may become a little granary, or treaſury to which thou maiſt alwaies reſort, when either the publike meanes may faile thee, or thou maiſt bee debarred from them. Be dilligent in gathering this Mannah while the ſixe dayes laſt, before that day come wherein though thou ſeekeſt it, yet ſhalt not finde it. In theſe ſeauen yeares of plenty, lay vp (like a prouident *Ioſeph*) for thy ſelfe corne for the ſeauen yeares of famine: wherein ſeauen leane kine ſhal eat vp the ſeauen fatte kine, and bee neuer the fatter. Paſſe not thy Summer ſinging with the fooliſh Graſhopper, but with the Emmet prepare thy Winters ſtore. When *Agabus* propheſied of a famine, *Act.* 11, 28. the bretheren were carefull to prouide againſt it: ſo thou now hearing that a time of dearth will come, in which thou ſhalt ſtand in need of great ſtore of grace; get thee a ſtocke before hand to ſpend vpon; leaſt when

Pro 30. 25.

Store thy selfe while thou hast the word.

when the time ouertaketh thee vnprouided, thou begin to late to houle and say: O the time was when I had the Word, the Sacraments, the Ministry, whereby I might haue not meanely inriched my selfe, and haue bene able to haue bene helpful to others, rather then my selfe to be vtterly destitute of prouision in such times as this is: and this is my griefe, I had warning that these daies of straightnesse would come vpon me. Alas that euer I should so haue lost my time, that euer I should haue refused wholesome counsell: oh that I might once more inioy the meanes againe! Oh for one day in the courts of Gods house! I would neuer neglect so great saluation.

And herein the folly of our nature bewrayeth it selfe that we are wiser in the want, then in the fruition of good things; and that we cannot so rightly prize a present benefite, as sighe after it when wee haue negligently depriued our selues of it.

The folly of such as slip their oportunity herein.

Caine cared not for the worship of God all the while he was in his fathers familie, till hee was cast out of it; and then

then too late he cryed out, that he was caſt out from the face of God. *Eſau* contemned his birth-right and bleſſing till it was beſtowed, and then could ſeeke it with teares when it was too late. *Saul* forceth not of *Samuels* prayers for him till the Lord was departed and had caſt him off. The Prodigal ſon careth not for the dainties of his fathers houſe, till he was driuen to feed among Swine; and then he can deſire to bee among his fathers herd-men. The prophane of the world take daies with the Lord: If they can be at leyſure to heare him another time with *Feſtus*, ſo it is, but for the preſent they cannot intend it. Many Profeſſors wil not foule their dainty feete now for the word; who I doubt not would afterward ſeeke the bleſſing (if God ſhould once deny it) & ỹ with teares: the caſe being ỹ ſame with vs as ſomtimes it was with *Iſrael* when they had with GODS Commandement all the incouragements which *Moyſes* could vſe to ſpeed them forward vnto *Canaan*; they would not go, but back again into *Egipt* in al the haſt: the text ſaith they refuſed ỹ land, *v.* 21. Number. 14.40.

But

But when once ſentence was paſt, that they ſhould neuer ſee ẏ good land. *Thẽ they roſe vp early in the morning, & were ready to go to the place which the Lord had promiſed*: now was there no ſtay with thẽ: neither ẏ Lords reuealed wil, nor *Moyſes* perſwaſion could ſo pale them in or preuaile with them, but that they preſumed obſtinatly to go forward. The ſame people before the captiuity, had the Temple, the Arke, the Sacrifices, the Oracles, they cared not greatly for them; it ſeemes the times were much like ours wherein to call men to the houſe of God, to ſpeake of Paſtors, preaching, Scriptures and holy exerciſes is to glut and ſurfet men, and ſo driue them from the loue of all: but the time commeth on, that the Lord requireth this contempt ẅ they dearly buy, hee caſteth them among Idola-
Pſal. 137. 1. ters, and Scoffers, by which humiliation he bringeth backe things paſt to their remembrance. *By the riuers of* Babel *we ſat and wept in remembrance of* Sion. What *Sion*? their cheekes were dry ynough before: but now in *Babell* they can weepe, now away with muſicke,

now

now can the harpes hang vppon their willow trees without a finger to touch them; neither their sweet melody of instruments, nor their pleasant walks, nor their christall riuers can affect them with ioy, seeing they were now banished and excommunicate from the publike exercises of religion before the Lord at *Sion*. And it were to be wished that euen such as belong to the Lord did not vnderprize such gratious pledges of Gods presence in the presence and plentifull fruition of them; who yet can with sighs mourne after them, being withdrawne from their eyes, no otherwise then when all *Israel* lamented after the Lord when the Arke was in *Kiriath-iearim*, 1. *Sam.* 7. 2. Verſ. 44.

The Lord Iesus woing his Church most louingly intreateth entrance into her. *Open vnto mee my well beloued for my head is full of dew, &c.* Oh no shee *hath putte of her caules*, shee will not disease her selfe so farre as to put them on; shee hath *washt her feete*, and meaneth not to foule them: while shee may haue Christ at the threshold she giues her selfe leaue to sleepe a little longer Cant. 5. 2. 3.

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longer,& in her ſleep ſhe ſlips that moſt ſweete oportunity:Chriſt leaues her to her eaſe which might not be diſlodged: but ſhortly after her ſoule awaking,and ſhee bethinking her ſelfe of her vnkind anſwer,ſteps to the doore to let him in; but he is gone in diſpleaſure ; now her heart is gone with him and ſmiteth her more then before ; ſhe ſeekes him, but finds him not;calleth him , but receiueth no anſwer:he is too neere to be let in and receiued while hee is at the doore;and therefore ſhee muſt trudge vp and downe after him,with much labour,& more greefe,inquyring of euery one ſhe meeteth,whether they haue met with him whom her ſoule loueth or no. By which example ſeeing that too much of this folly is boũd vp in the harts of the beſt of vs;let vs ſtriue to become more wiſe-harted in intertaining our priuiledges whilſt they be offerd.

The Centurion could ſay when Chriſt was dead ; this was the ſon of God,hee ſhould haue ſaid ſo when he was aliue. Let vs acknowledge Chriſt while he is preſent, & reioice in Gods face , in the aſſemblies,in the miniſtry,leaſt whẽ our

vnthankfulnes

vnthankfulnes hath fortified them, wee lament the losse when it cannot be sup- Ier. 7. 13.
plied: & this is the rather to be thus vr-
ged and beaten vpon; because it is with Act. 20. 24.
many a mā, as it was with the people of *Ephesus*: whē *Paul* was taking his leaue of the Elders of *Ephesus*, he told them *that he knew they should see his face no more*; thē they wept abundantly, but especially were sorry at these words, that they should see his face no more, euen so a number of men are neuer sorry nor weepe, are without al affections to the Ministry & Ministers, til they be taking their leaue and say they shall see their face no more; and then they wish that they had taken more good by their presence; and then if occasion were offred again they would be more careful, and not forslow such oportunities: these considerations are so much ẏ more seasonable to you the present hearers, ẏ now at the first entrance of this blessing you may lay hold of it, so as your increase in the end may be much more abundant.

The second point of instruction out Doctr. 2.
of the word, is this: that it is *a note of a good man more to reioice in the prosperity*

of

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A good heart reioiceth in the prosperity of the Church & Ministery.

of the Church and the holy exercises of the ministry, then in al the delights among the sonnes of men besides. For who can condemne in this holy man of God such an holy desire as this is? Nay who can deny but that our affections & wishes ought to be in some measure sutable vnto his? And therfore that it is our part with him, to prefer the reioycing and comfort of one day within the Church, aboue a thousand elsewhere, not excepting the Pallaces of Princes: yea and that wee might bee so happy in the fruition of this desire, to choose a very meane estate with it, rather then the most glorious condition of the earth without it.

Quest. But what moued the prophet *Dauid*, or what did he see or find in this assembly, or in the Ministery that could so rauish and affect him? For men of common eies cannot see any such extraordinary thing in them so violently to draw them; it may seem there was some secret force, which drew out such affectionate desires in him.

Ans. It was indeed a secret force of the spirit of GOD, from whom such setled and

and ſanctified deſires can only proceed: and yet wee may not conceiue ſuch to bee immediate motions, and vngrounded flaſhes, but ſuch as the Spirit raizeth by meanes: Both firſt cauſing *the beauty of GODS houſe* to appeare bright to their eyes: and ſecond, reuealing to them *the priuiledges which Gods people there partake*, and cannot againe meete with them in any ſociety beſides.

The former appeareth, *Pſalm*, 27.4. *One thing I deſired of the Lord, and will deſire it, that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the daies of my life.*

But what mooued *Dauid* thus to wiſh this one thing? *That I might ſee the beauty of thine houſe*: and although the beautie of the Sanctuary ſo farre forth as it was externall, in regard of the matter, of the forme, of the whole ordination of it: yea and all the vtenſils euen to the very pinnes of it, which all were of the Lords owne inuention & inſtitution, and might therefore haue drawne carnall mindes vnto it (as at this day the ſenſible and plauſible ſplendor and beauty of the Church of *Rome* doth

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many ſuperſtitious people) yet was neuer any good and ſincere heart (ſuch as *Dauids* was) ſatisfied with externall things in Gods worſhip: well knowing that as God is a ſpirit; ſo nothing is there pleaſing vnto him which is not ſpiritual: there are therfore other beauties which the ſtranger entreth not into ỹ beholding of; yea ſuch as cānot be beheld but with eyes as cleare as chriſtall.

Beauties of the houſe of God.

Queſt. What are the *beauties* you ſpeake of? *Anſw.* They may be reduced vnto theſe *two* heads: They are ſeene *partly* in reſpect of the *parties* preſent: and partly in the *things* performed in ſuch holy aſſemblies.

1 the preſence of God.

The *perſons* preſent; are, firſt; *GOD himſelfe*: whence ſuch places are called *Bethells*, as *Dauid* here *thy houſe: thy courts*: and are no other then the preſence chambers of this euerlaſting King of glory. Here he ſitteth in a chaire of Eſtate, as formerly he ſate between the Cherubins: How can it then bee but that the glory of the Lord ſhould fill euery ſuch houſe of his, as once it did the Temple 1. *King.* 8. 11. or where can a faithful ſoule more ſecurely, more

ioyfully

ioyfully reſt it ſelfe, then in Gods owne reſting place?

Secondly, *Chriſt himſelfe is heere preſent*: for *whereſoeuer two or three are gathered togither in his name, he is in the midſt of them*. *Hee walketh in the midſt of the ſeauen golden Candelſticks*: And no where elſe (if hee bee miſſing) can his parents and kindred finde him then in then Temple. Math. 18. 20. Reue. 1 17. Luk. 2, 96. 2. The preſence of Chriſt.

Now is not this a greater beauty then any which can elſe-where bee eſpied? wherein the ſecond Temple paſſed the glory of the former: & yet ours exceed the ſecond! For how could the ſecond Temple wanting 1. Gods preſence betweene the Cherubins. 2. the Vrim and Thumim. 3. the inſpiration & raizing vp of extraordinary prophets. 4. the Arke it ſelfe the ſeat of God, which was taken in the captiuity. 5. fire from heauen to conſume their ſacrifices: how could (I ſay) the ſecond Temple wanting all theſe, be truly ſaid to exceed the glory of the former, which had thē al? But only in regard of Chriſts bodily preſence which by entring into it was to beautifie it? And yet the effectuall preſence

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of his ſpirit now with vs, is farre more powerful and glorious, then was his bodily preſence in that Temple.

Now ſeeing that Chriſt is the churches welbeloued, and is *more then other welbeloueds*, euen *the cheefe of ten thouſand*; and hath not left vs direction to meet him any where, ſaue in *the tents of ſheapheards*, and *in the ſteps of the flockes*: ſhould any chriſtian ſoule (which is knitte vnto him in ſpirituall wedlocke; the contract beeing alreadie made, and the daye of their marriage apointed, and approching) deſire any ſocyetie more then his? Nay ought not euerie beleeuing ſoule to wiſh one houre ſpent in his ſocyetie and fellowſhippe, rather then ten thouſand with any beſides? So as hitherto *Dauid* was not wide in his wiſh and reioycing.

Cant. 5.9. 10.

Cant. 1.7

3. The preſence of the holy ſpirit of God.

Thirdly, *the holie ſpirit of* GOD is preſent in our aſſemblies; moſt plentifullie pouring out of his full buckets the treaſures of wiſdome and grace; yea the variety of graces *accompanying ſaluation*. Neither doth this ſpirit ordinarily diſplay him-ſelf elſe-where: who although

although *hee bloweth where hee listeth* in regard of the free and vndeserued graces which hee poureth out: yet is it ordinarily by meanes of the Word, Sacramentes, Prayer, Censures publikely exercised and administred according to the will of God.

Hence is it that wee reade still of the *VVord* and *Spirit*; and *water* and the *Spirit* ioyned together, because the spirit ordinarily putteth forth the grace of regeneration in the meanes of the word and sacraments. Now who hath not good cause, to wish (if not all his time) yet the most of it there spent; where by the worke and presence of the spirit, he may so happily inrich himselfe vnto life euerlasting, rather then else-where, where is nothing but spiritual pouerty, nakednesse, and beggery?

Fourthlie, *the holie Angels of God are* here present in our assemblies. Whence the Apostle 1. Cor. 11. 10. wisheth the *woman to haue power ouer her head because of the Angells*: that is, the woman in the congregation must couer her head, as for other reasons, so for this which is not the least; in

4. The presence of the Angells.

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that the Angels are preſent, and behold the order and behauiour of men & women. But why are the Angells preſent wil ſome ſay? I anſwer not onely in way of Miniſtery and ſeruice vnto the Lord, vnto the elect, and vnto his Miniſtery, ſundry waies both aſſiſting and helping it forward, and withſtanding ſuch enmities as otherwiſe reſiſt it: but alſo after a ſort to ſolace, and reioyce them-ſelues in the beauty of GODS houſe, ſo 1. *Pet.* 1. 12. *VVhich things the Angells deſire to behold*; ſpeaking of the Miſteries publiſhed in the Goſpell.

ἐπιθυμοῦσι παρακύψαι desirous to ſtoope downe.

To which maketh that interpretation of the place in *Hebrews* 12. 16. *Yet once more will I ſhake not the earth only, but alſo heauen.* The meaning of which words by the iudgement of ſome excellent Diuines, is this: that the voice of God in the deliuery of the law did cauſe the men on earth that hard it to quake and tremble; but now in the preaching and deliuery of the Ghoſpell, the verie Angells in heauen, are after a ſort ſhaken, beeing rauiſhed & rapt into the admiration of it. Are there then ſuch beauties in the aſſéblies as that very Angels them-

themſelues admire? & ſhall not men for whom they were inſtituted ſeek both to eſpy, & be affected with them? and who can b ame him that can come to prize theſe beauties aboue all that the earth can afford beſides? Seeing the Angells themſelues who are ſtript frō all earthly deſires and delights, are ſaid to admire theſe, but neuer the other: ſuch a man indeed is come nere to Angelical perfection. Fiftly, *The Saints of God* here preſent themſelues in whō *al our delight* ought to be. For as the *Tribes of the Lord vſed to goe vppe to his houſe*, that they might worſhip before him in his Tabernacle & temple: euen ſo now the people of God aſſemble themſelues in our congregations to the ſame purpoſe. Now when I ſay *the people of God*, I mean not al hand ouer head, who promiſcuoſly come together; notwithſtanding they all are his people by right of creation and preſeruation, & yet of them ſome are openly & profeſſed prophane ones; Neither all thoſe who ioyne in externall profeſſion and exerciſes of religion; of whom yet many are not inwardly purged: in which ſence the old world called them

Pſal. 16, 3
Pſal. 122. 4
5. The preſence of the Saints of God vpon the earth.

Taylor, T.

ſonnes of GOD. That is, all the poſterity of *Seth* and *Enoſh*, oppoſed to the daughters of men voyde of all religion and pietie. But I meane thoſe of GODS election; that are called of his purpoſe, that haue obtayned mercie, and who proceede on in the waies of ſanctification vnto ſaluation.

Theſe are called in Scripture an holie people, a choſen generation, a people by purchaſe, the doue of Chriſt, his vndefiled, his treaſure: and their propertie is deſcribed, *that they flye as a lowde, and flocke as the Doues vnto theſe windowes*. Which propheſie although it bee properlie to bee vnderſtood of the vniuerſall and generall calling and concurſe of the Gentiles vnto the Church, who ſhould come with ſuch celerity and ſwiftneſſe as if a cloud were with violence of windes carried from one ſide and region of heauen to the other; and in ſuch flockes and multitudes, as if a whole flight of piegeons (driuen either by tempeſt, or by an Eagle, or ſome other birde of prey) ſhould ſcoure vnto their columbarie, and ruſh into the windowes:

Iſay. 60.8

yet

yet this propertie is ſo peculiar vnto perſons once called and conuerted, as by which the holie Ghoſt pleaſeth to expreſſe them, rather then by any other title, that they are ſuch as flocke to the windowes of the Church, by which the Lord conueyeth to his people his light of inſtruction, of conſolation, of grace, of glory. So elſe-where, the ſcriptures note them to bee ſuch as *ſeeke the Lord* in his ordinances, ſuch as *ſeeke the face of the Lord*, ſuch as *call one another to the houſe of the Lord*, and ſuch as cheerfully and couragiouſly march on, and will not giue out, vntill *they meete the Lord in Sion*.

Obſ. If it be here obiected, that theſe are but a few in compariſon of the multitude which reſort vnto the houſe of God: who belong no otherwiſe vnto him, then reteiners vnto their Lords or maiſters, they weare his cloath, and now and then giue ſome formall attendance, but are no houſhold ſeruants.

An. I anſwer. That true it is that the beſt part for the moſt part, is the leaſt part, if wee conſider the truth of the thing: but yet Chriſtian loue bindeth

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vs to iudge the best of all that ioyne with vs euen in the outward seruice of God, for wee cannot enter into their hearts, but must leaue them to stand or fall to their owne Lord, and forbeare to iudge them before the time.

Secondly, wee must (notwithstanding the multitude of prophane & hypocriticall persons in the congregation,) frame our iudgements vnto Gods, who esteemeth the assemblies frō the better part, and not from the greater; he knew well that many moe who were but Iewes without, and in the letter resorted vnto the tabernacle; thē those who were Iewes within; yet it still retained the titles of *Gods house, & Gods courts.*

Thirdly, It is a glorious thing to be admitted euen to the outward profession of religion, notwithstanding all are not of the Church that are in it. In which regard *Ioshua* calleth all Israell *the Lords possession*, euen because his tabernacle dwelt amongst them. And thus was it prophecied by *Balaam* himselfe, that *Israell should dwell alone, and should not bee numbred among the nations, for Israell was a people of a pure language.*

Iosh. 22. 19
Num. 23. 9
Zeph. 3. 9.

guage. In all which the nation of the Iewes were aduanced aboue all other people, because they were distinct and seperated from all other; both in their religion, lawes, rites and condition of life, all of them appointed and established by God himselfe.

How much more beautiful then and glorious are the cõgregations of Gods people, in regard of such who are truly the Lords holy ones? allied vnto Christ, Saints by calling, and begin to lead euen an heauenly life vpon earth? What is it that maketh the Court more louely and glorious, then all the rest of the pallaces of the land besides? It is not so much the stately building or other braueries, but the presence of the King, Queene, Prince, Lords, Ladies, and other their attendants answerably where the exercises of religion are established, are beauties no whit inferiour, but farre passing the former. *Salomon* describing the glorious condition of the church, compareth it to the Courts of Kings and Monarches of the earth, but infinitely aduanceth it aboue them all, euen in this consideration.

Gods courts more glorious then the courts of Princes.

There

Cant. 6.7 *There are threescore Queenes, and fourescore Concubines, and Damsells without number.* As though hee had said: If in any Court of the world insteed of one Queene (for ordinarily there are no moe) there were three-score, and all attendance proportionall, though this were such a glorious and beautifull a sight as neuer man saw, yet were it not comparable to the beauty of the Church, euery true member of which is a King ouer his lusts, and heire to the crowne of heauen.

True it is that this beautie of the Saints which beautifieth the assemblies is partly blemished and stained, and partlie hidde and couered. The former by many prophane *Esaus*, that thrust themselues into the profession, who a while seeme to bee liuing stones; but after appeare but stubble laid vpon the foundation. These are spots in our meetings, who so farre as in them lie, make the Church resemble *Nebuchadnezers* image; whose head was of gold, but the belly and feete of Iron and clay, which will not bee tempered together but fall a sunder.

The

The latter, partly becauſe this Kings daughter is glorious; but within, her comlineſſe is like the Curteines of the tabernacle, which outwardly were of courſer ſtuffe, but within coſtly for the matter, and curious for the exquiſite workmanſhippe; and like to the beauty of Chriſt him-ſelfe in whom men ſawe neither forme nor beautie, partly becauſe their infirmities cloude their beautie, and darken them in mens eyes, when yet they remaine moſt deare vnto God: and partly becauſe the ſunne of affliction and perſecution looketh much and often vpon them, which maketh them ſeeme blacker then they are, and thus Chriſt him-ſelfe was deſpiſed becauſe men iudged him as plagued and ſmitten of God. *Iſa.* 53.4, and *Iob* counted an hypocrite of his friends. No meruaile then it is, that ſuch eyes as are not annointed with the eye-ſalue cannot prie into this inward and ſecret obiect: no meruaile if eyes thus accuſtomed to falſe glaſſes be diſtempered; no wonder if eyes ſtill gazing vpon ſuch clouds bee held from ſeeing the hidden glory of the Saints, no otherwiſe then

Cauſes why the beauty of the Saints is not ſeene of the moſt.

Taylor, I.

Eliſhaes

Eliſhaes ſeruant was, who could not ſee the glorie which ſhone rounde about him. But ſuch as are the Lords muſt herein expreſſe the vertue and image of their heauenly father, who delighteth in his people as in his portion; whom hee accounteth beautifull as the Lilly, and ſweete as the Roſe. Euen ſo all our delight ſhould bee in the Saints which excell in vertue: let them be by infirmities, by afflictions blacke, yet in our eye they muſt bee comely: the ſhining graces of God in them ought as by ſtrong cordes to draw our affections vnto them: and if in our priuate courſe we ought to edifie our ſelues by this, & by our conuerſing with them, partake of their graces and encreaſe or ſtir vp our owne: much more ſhould we with all cheerefulneſſe partake with them in the publicke worſhip of God, by whoſe preſence, behauiour and praiers our ioy is more full, and our ſeruice more acceptable. Eſpecially ſeeing this whole Pſalme ſheweth how our Prophet from this conſideration did not a little prouoke his heart and beſt affections vnto the aſſemblies.

Now

Now to end this point, ſeeing wee are taught that here is the Court of the King of glorie, the holy God ſitteth here in the holie aſſemblies, the holy Angels of God are heere preſent; the holie Saints of GOD ſtand here vpon this holie ground: how is it that wee cannot conceiue theſe meetings to bee the moſt beautifull places of the earth? How are wee yet as blinde as Moles, if wee eſpie not and turne not our eyes vnto ſuch beauties? what a fearefull deluſion is befallen them, who are ſo eaſily wone to the painted beautie of an harlot, and deſpiſe the natiue beautie of the ſpouſe of Chriſt? What a certaine damnation abide ſuch, as by ſcorning the holy exerciſes of our publicke meetings, and reproching the Preachers, and Miniſters of them, ſeeke to turne this our glory into ſhame? but more of this in the vſes following the doctrine. Thus much wee haue ſpoken of the honorable perſons preſent in our congregations, the dutifull reſpect of whō (if we wanted other motiues) were forcible enough to draw God'y hearts with cheerfulneſſe vnto our meetings.

Now

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Now the things which are *performed* in the congregation, are of the ſame qualitie; euen *holy things*: namely the whole publike worſhip of God, ſtanding eſpecially in the Miniſterie of 1. *Word*, 2. *Sacrament*, 3. *Prayer*, 4. *Keyes* of the Church: of none of which can any that knowes them affirme truly, that it wanteth power & perſwaſion to draw any godly heart vnto it.

Benefits by the publick reading of the word.

And firſt in theſe meetings it cannot bee denied, but that wee enioy a moſt comfortable and pretious treaſure of the *worde* of God, and that both *reade* and *preached*, the weaker of which meanes wanteth not his fruitfull vſe in the Church, that whoſoeuer aſcribeth not much vnto the publicke reading of the Scriptures: well conſidereth not the neceſſity of that ancient ordinance of God, who of olde *would haue* Moſes *reade euery ſabboth*, and inſtituted a *lecture of the law and Prophets*. The which ordinance of God, not onely the holie Apoſtles: but the ſonne of God himſelfe graced, yea honored not with his preſence onely; but alſo with his miniſtery; for (as his cuſtome was) *hee went into*

Act. 15.21.
Act. 13.15.
Luk. 4.16.

into the ſynagogue on the Sabboth day, and ſtood vp to read. And if here it bee asked, what are the ſpeciall benefits reaped by this ordinance inſtituted out of the wiſdome of God: I anſwer. Firſt, It is a notable meanes to come to the knowledge of the hiſtory of the Scriptures, wherein the chiefe workes that euer the Lord did in the Church are recorded, whether of iuſtice or of mercie, eſpecially thoſe of our fall in the firſt *Adam*, & recouery by the ſecond. Secondly, to confirme our faith in all the points of Chriſtian faith and religion: the maine grounds of which we haue fore-prophecied of in the old teſtament, and are fulfilled in the new. 3. To direct our iudgements in *prooning of all things; and holding that which is good*, as the Bæreans *ſearched the Scriptures, to ſee whether the things were ſo* as *Paul* preached, which if it bee a fruite of priuate reading (as the reſt alſo are) much more of publicke. Act.17.11. Fourthly, to traine vs to the more profitable hearing of the word preached. Fiftly, to acquaint vs with the phraſe of the Scripture; ſo as wee can both

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vnderſtand, and ſpeake the *language of Canaan.*

The benefits of the word preached.

But who can ſpeake of the glory of our miniſtery, in regarde of the worde preached: which as a more ordinary and principall meanes leadeth vs along vnto ſaluation, by a more full manifeſtation of the promiſe of life: yea not onely *explayning* things to cleare them to the vnderſtanding; but applying them vnto the heart and affection, and vrging them vpon the life and conuerſation of a Chriſtian. The bleſſed worke of which inſtitution will euidently appeare, if wee conſider the obiects vpon whome it worketh; and thoſe bee eyther the *vnconuerted*, or *conuerted*, or *both.*

In regarde of the *vnconuerted*, it is the ordinarie meanes to beget them to God, by enlightening their eyes, opening their eares, mollifying their hearts, and working faith in their ſoules, *which commeth by hearing.* Rom. 10. And what a bleſſed worke is this whereby the ſonnes of wrath become the ſonnes of GOD? whereby thoſe who are layd lowe in hell by ſinne, are rai-

raiſed vnto the glory of the higheſt heauen? and whereby the iuſt heyres of damnation are entituled into the ſtate of ſaluation, to receiue inheritance among thoſe that are ſanctified, In this excellent vſe is it called a Miniſterie of *reconciliation*, of *peace*, a word of *grace*, of *ſaluation*, and of life. 2. In reſpect of thoſe who are conuerted: It is a powerfull meanes of the ſpirit; Firſt to encreaſe their knowledge, by the daily clearing of their iudgements from error, and ignorance; and leading them into all neceſſarie truths. Secondly, to ſtrengthen and encreaſe their faith, bringing it with dayly progreſſe from the infancie and weakneſſe of it, till the beleeuer attaine his tallneſſe and ſtrength in Chriſt.

2. Cor. 5. 18
Eph. 6. 15.
Acts. 14. 3.
Act. 20. 32

Thirdly, to call them from their dayly wandrings and ſtrayings, and ſettle them in a godly courſe.

Fourthly, to preuent their falles, whileſt they are heere *partlye* furniſhed with Chriſtian Armour againſt temptations; for through the Miniſterie of the worde; *Sathan falleth like lightning from heauen.*

Taylor, 1.

Luc.10. 18 and his *ſtrongeſt holdes are caſt downe*:
2.Cor.10. 4. partly while they are counſelled in their doubts, finding the word in this Miniſterie, eſpecially the *man of their counſels*. Partly while they are admoniſhed of ſuch wayes as are diſagreeable to ſuch an high calling as they haue vndertaken. Fiftly, to raiſe them out of falls, by diſcouering vnto them the nature and danger of ſinne, the working of their owne infirmities, the bitter roote of originall corruption: the poyſoned fruites of it: and by many motiues continually prouoking their repentance, which was the ſcope
Math. 3. 2. *Chriſts fore-runners Sermon*; yea of his
Marc. 1.15 *owne preaching*, and *of his Apoſtles*.
Acts. 2.38 Sixtly, moſt abſolutely to direct them through their whole Chriſtian courſe. If they be alone, it affordeth them matter of holy meditation; that they are neuer leſſe then alone, when they are moſt alone, except thoſe can be alone, who walke with God. And if they bee to deale with others, it enableth them to become great lights; ready and furniſhed to inſtruct, and comfort abroade, to bee as eyes to the blinde:

and

and feete to bring the lame to Chriſt: and at home to teach and pray with their family, ſo as their houſes become little *Bethels*, and houſes of GOD, in which the Lord is truely and conſtantly worſhipped, and both themſelues and the Churches in their houſes, dayly edified vpon their moſt holy faith.

Now in regarde both of the wicked who are by the worde preached, more hardened, and of the godly whoſe number by the ſame meanes are dayly augmented and accompliſhed, the appearing of Chriſt vnto Judgement is haſtened, which the Saints ought to long after, as in which they expect, and ſhall attaine their full redemption.

Secondly, in the *Sacraments* wee drinke yet deeper of the Lords bountie, who contenteth not himſelfe to bring his children vnto the faith by the former meanes, vnleſſe alſo hereby hee raiſe them vnto a full growth in Chriſt. As a tender mother accounts it not enough to bring forth her child, except ſhee alſo nurſſe and cheriſh it

Comfort by the holy ſacraments.

Taylor, I.

vp vnto mans eſtate. So hath the Lord in theſe ſacraments to ſhew the aboundant ſweetneſſe of his loue in Chriſt, after hee hath in the word preached, made the couenant of grace knowne vnto men; hee alſo doth moſt ſurely ſeale it vp vnto their ſoules, by thoſe
Rom.4.11. *ſeales of the righteouſneſſe of faith.* The former ſealing vp their vnion, ingrafting and fellowſhip with Chriſt, from whom as from a roote, they draw and ſucke the moyſture of grace, without which they are but dead, and withered branches. The latter aſſuring their continuall grouth, and encreaſe in him, till they become tall trees of righteouſneſſe, and both of them further helping both our vnderſtandings as *glaſſes* by which we ſee clearer into the miſtery of our redemption; as alſo our memories, as *monuments* before our eyes, with which ſence of learning our God would haue vs taught, as well as by the other of hearing: as in the third place both of them not onely ſpurring vp euery beleeuer to the performing of the couenant; but alſo ſtrengthening him to euery good duty, where-

by

by hee may magnifie this grace of God.

Thirdly for *prayer*, how vnſpeakable is the glory of GOD rendred by the Church, gathered together, and how wonderfull are the bleſſings which are vouchſafed the Church from God, in and by meanes of this holy dutie, eſpecially when they are aſſembled *in the houſe of prayer*? In the former regarde is it ſayd by the Prophet, *Praiſe waiteth for thee in Sion.* For what greater honour can befall the Lord, then firſt in petition to bee acknowledged the giuer of euery good and perfect gift? to bee depended vpon for all comfort, inſtruction and euery good grace: to bee acknowledged the author and finiſher of our faith, the beginner and accompliſher of all our workes, in vs and for vs? and in the confeſſion of our indignity and miſery (euen the beſt) to haue his free grace amplified, and his prerogatiue yeelded him, whoſe priuiledge it is to ſay; *I will forgiue*? Secondly, in prayſes to be magnified by his whole Church for

By publicke prayer how God is glorifyed.

Pſal. 65. 2.

TAYLOR, I.

the fruites of his free loue, manifeſtlie ſhining in his workes of creation, redemption, preſeruation, and ſaluation of his Church: yea and when his people haue done all they can in way of thankfulneſſe for them; yet euen the beſt of them ſhall acknowledge, that they cannot finde what to render vnto him for his vndeſerued loue: Thus the Tribes goe vppe to *Ieruſalem* to praiſe the name of the Lord.

Pſa. 166.18
Pſal. 122.4

In the ſecond reſpect, what a ſingular priuiledge is it that wee haue leaue giuen vs by our requeſts to ſpeake and commune with our God? and where-as the riche treaſures of grace and good things are with him ſurely kept as vnder locke and key: how happily may wee by this meanes vnlocke and open them all vnto our ſelues? Yea that when wee cannot by any thing in vs or from vs demerite the leaſt bleſſing (wee beeing leſſe then the leaſt mercy) yet if wee can but lift vppe one requeſt of faith wee haue preuayled, and ouer-come God himſelfe in the greateſt.

The members of the Church aboundantly enriched.

And

And if the prayer of *one righteous man* can preuaile ſo much as the ſcriptures teſtifie of *Moyſes*, *Iacob*, *Elias*: how much more *when two or three conſent togither* in priuat prayer? But when publike prayer is preſented vp by many, yea the whole church; how can that but exceed in ſtrength? For as in experience we ſee, many flowers bound together yeeld the ſtronger ſent; and compound water is ſweeter thē ſimple; many ſticks make a great fire; and vnited force more forceable: ſo euery chriſtian alone and a part in this duty is acceptable vnto God; but when many ioyne in holy ſociety, they are much more pleaſing vnto him, much more ioyfull among them-ſelues, and much more mutually incouraged to the practiſes of piety, & loue one towards another.

Publike breaches are ſoone made vp if many *Moyſeſes* ſtand vp in the gap. Publike peace if it be wanting is ſpeedily and happily procured when many *Eliaſes* lift vp requeſts vnto the Lord, euery one of which are as ſtrong as the *Horſemen* and *Chariots of Iſrael*. Publike bleſſings are eaſily obteyned when many

Prayers of the faithful are the wals and munition of a people.

TAYLOR, I.

many *Iacobs* wraſtle together with the Lord: Fully reſolued *not to lette him goe vntill hee haue giuen them a bleſſing.*

Rom.15. 30. 2 Cor.1.11. The publike miniſtry is ſucceſſefully both ſetled and exerciſed when the Saints *ſtriue* with their Miniſters by *prayers to God for them*: and when the faithfull *labour together in praier* for the ſame purpoſe.

The priuate neceſſities alſo of any one priuate member of the Church, are ſooner ſupplied by the inſtance and importunity of the whole; and ſuch as cannot come vpon their owne feet (as the *man ſicke of the palſie*) are lette downe by the cordes of the churches prayer and ſette before Chriſt. A powerfull and preuayling thing is it with the Lord when a number of beleeuers are in one place, and one accord, of one heart, and one ſoule as it were in many bodies, to whom hee hath giuen one heart and one way, yea one pure language to cal on his name and ſerue him with one ſhoulder. Fourthly, if vnto the three former we ſhal ad the laſt part of the miniſtry performed in our holy meetings, we ſhall ſee both the glory of

Luk.5.19. Zep.3.9. Act.2.46. & ver.32. Ier.32.39.

God

God further inlarged, & the benefit of the church amplified. For here we haue alſo to our vnſpeakable good, the *Keyes of the Kingdome* opening and ſhutting heauen; the power of binding or looſing of ſinners. The authority of deliuering to Satan the obſtinate ſinners and releaſing the penitent. Now what glory is it to the almighty when his iuſt ſentence is before hand denounced againſt the vngodly of the earth? Where by him-ſelfe is cleared in his iudgement and the ſinner more iuſtlie wrapped vp in the bandes of death which he had no care to preuent.

And on the other ſide no leſſe comfort it is for the humble ſoule in the ſame Miniſterie of the Word preached to bee fully releaſed from ſinne, and abſolued from all his vnrighteouſneſſe, and aſſured that whatſoeuer ſuch ſentence is rightly pronounced in Earth is ratified alſo in Heauen.

Theſe thinges beeing of ſuch an high nature, as in which the publicke worſhippe of GOD is performed to his ſo great glorie, and our owne

Taylor, I.

own ſo great good, no marueil if *Dauid* be ſo inſtant in his deſire: & yet theſe things were after a ſort vailed and but ſhadowed in that miniſtry of the ſanctuary. For the Arke it ſelfe was with curtaines, and there lay no high way vnto it, no not for *Dauid* him-ſelf: only men muſt look towards it in their
1 Kings. 8.9. *prayers*. And within that Arke were hidde and cheſted vppe the tables of the couering repreſenting the *VVord*, read and preached: In the Tabernacle alſo was the golden potte of Mannah a ſpeciall type of our *Sacraments*: and the rod of *Aaron* ſhadowing the rod of the church *Diſcipline*. How much more ſhould wee (were wee not ſo blockiſh as men hewne out of hard okes) reioyce in ſuch an open and glorious face of Ieſus Chriſt? Yea with the Pro-
Verſ. 4. phet account it our *Bleſſedneſſe* to dwel in the Lords houſe, where we may euer praiſe him: becauſe hereby wee come neareſt vnto the life of iuſt and perfect men in heauen; to the which while wee frame our ſelues afore-hand, wee haue entred into ſome degree of their bleſſedneſſe, as alſo of our owne.

Thus

Thus farre wee hetherto diſcouered thoſe beautyes of the houſe of God, both in reſpect of *Perſons* preſent and *holy thinges* performed: which if men could ſee with bodily eyes, (as they cannot bee perceiued but by ſuch as haue cleared eies) they would excite admirable loue and affection towardes them.

Now we are to intreat of the *priuiledges*, and benefits which Gods people reape by frequenting the ſame: and the rather that ſuch as perhaps little regard the glory of God, ſhining in his ordinances, brighter then the Sunne in his ſtrength, might yet for their owne aduantage and profitte bee perſwaded with diligence and reuerence in this his houſe to ſeeke the face of the *LORD*.

The priuiledges of Gods people in the aſſemblyes.

Now although the priuiledges be as manyfold in number, as excellent in their quallity: yet I will content my ſelfe to note *foure* of them: and theſe foure rather then any other, becauſe I ſee them to bee ſuch as moued in the Prophet *Dauid* aboue all other theſe holy and ardent deſires; as in euery of them

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them will plainely appeare.

1 Instruction. First, the benefit of *light* and instruction. The first work that the Lord doth in these little worlds (as once in the great) is to seperate light and darknes in such as are in Christ created againe vnto good workes. For which purpose the Lord him-selfe by his spirit becommeth the Schoolmaister of his people, teaching them to know him in himselfe in his Christ : to beleeue , to worke and walke. Heere in his house (setting a coppy to all maisters of familyes what to doe in their houses) hee openeth his treasures of wisdome , and teacheth no triuiall matters : But first, for their *necessitie* , matters of life and death. Second , for their dignitie such misteries as flesh and blood can neuer attayne vnto ; partly concerning God, as the doctrine of the Trinity. Partly concerning Christ , as of his incarnation , conception , vnion of his natures , and partly concerning our selues. As our resurrection , life eternall all which are matters of faith. Third, for their *vse* such as perswade the

the truth, preſerue frō error, raize ſuch as are falne, ſtrengthen thoſe that ſtand, comfort the afflicted, pacifie the conſcience, confirme the certaine hope of life eternall, and deliuer the deeds of it into our hands: & indeed the benefit of our redemption and whole ſaluation by Chriſt were little worth without theſe holy meanes whereby it is reuealed and applyed vnto vs.

This is that benefit which our Prophet expreſſeth in the beginning of the verſe following. *For the LORD GOD is the Sunne* That is look what the Sunne is to the World, that is the *LORD GOD* to his Church the Sunne of the World is not ſo neceſſary to lighten the day, as this Sunne of the Church to lighten the darkeneſſe and dungeon of the ſoules of men: without w (ſeeing all our heauenly lght is from it) our eſtate is far more vncomfortable then that of the *Egiptians* in their three daies darkeneſſe: for here no man can all his dayes ſtirre out of the place where his naturall corruption hath ſette him. And where ſhines this Sun but Exod. 10. 23.

Taylor, T.

Downe go Dagon and *Diana* before the Arke.

but in the church, this is the *Goshen* where this light is: In the ministry especially it displayeth the beames of it.

2. Sustenance and safety.

Secondly, necessary prouision both for *sustenance* and *safety* of soule and body. First for the *susteining* of the *soule* heere, is milke, and stronger meat: here wee haue the Lord pouring out all his goodnesse: Here the great King prepareth a great supper, killeth his fatlings, prepareth his milke and wine, spreadeth his table, setteth on it Iesus Christ the bread and water of life: whose flesh is meat indeed; whose blood is drinke indeed: Here he by his ministers inuiteth and intreateth men to ỹ banquet: here he filleth the hungry and thirsty soule with good things: worketh new strẽgth of life and grace; as reioycing in God; peace of good conscience, ioy in the holy Ghost, watchfulnesse against sinne, comfort in tribulation, quickenesse and strength in good duties, boldnesse in good causes, and a life led and finished in faith and obedience. Here the Lord *clotheth* the naked soule, and putteth on it the Lord Iesus Christ, whose righteousnesse

teousneſſe becommeth the coſtly and comely rayment of it. Heere hee *inricheth* the poore ſoule with treaſures of grace and godlyneſſe. Heere by the fire of his ſpirit hee *warmeth* and reuiueth the ſtaruen ſoule. Here is the *tree of life* for the ſicke ſoule, the leaues whereof ſerue to cure the nations. In a word; Chriſt offered and receiued in the Miniſtry, is food and Phiſicke, cloth and warmth, wealth and health, life and length of daies, yea all in all vnto the ſoule of all his beleeuing ones. And 2. for *bodily* food and rayment with other neceſſaries for the life preſent, although thoſe who ar without ȳ church inioy them; yet they haue them not in that ſpeciall bleſſing and comfort, as the members of the church; who 1. haue them by vertue of that ſpecial promiſe: *Firſt ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and other things ſhal be caſt on you:* & 2. hold them by a right and title in Chriſt: and 3. are taught how to imploy them to the glory of the giuer, all which make theſe bleſſinges good to them as they are in them-ſelues.

Secondly, for *perfection and ſafety:*

Satan foyled, armies of his forces discomfited.

1. *Spiritual*, here is a shadow & sweete refuge against the whole wrath of God appeased by Christ: here we see sin subdued, death vanquished, righteousnes purchased, great deliuerance wrought for the soules of beleeuers: here we haue strength in temptation, and victory ouer our selues: for here is Gods grace reueled which is sufficient for vs.

Now this saluation of God is not elswher to be heard off, but in the tidings which we bring; nor reuealed vnto any but the true members of the church. *In* Mount Sion *& in* Ierusalem *shall be deliuerance.* As for *temporal* perfection: whereas when men are cast out of the sight of God (as vnbeleeuers who are without the pale of Gods protectiō) they ly opē vnto the *sword, famine, captiuity*, to the *dogs to teare*, to the *foules of heauen*, & the *beasts of the field to deuour*: so on the contrary the neerer God the surer of safety; for iudgements flye farre frō God. Hence is it that to the members of the church, safety is promised vnder the shadow of the winges of the almighty, especially while they are in the performāce of publick duties before the Lord, and it is worthy our

Ioel. 2. 32.

Ier. 15. 2.

obseruing

obſeruing that the Lord in making that law of the three feaſtes, wherein all the men three times euery yeare muſt repaire before the Lord & continue each time in his worſhippe together many daies; preuenteth all their obiections: for they might ſay, but wil not this giue great aduantage to the enemy to watch ſuch times to win their coũtries again, Which in any one of thoſe three times in our ſo long abſence from our houſes, leauing none to defend thẽ but women & childrẽ they might eaſily enter vpõ? Or were it not fit if there muſt be three ſuch meetings ỹ the people of one prouince ſhould aſſemble at one of them, & they of another at the ſecond, and ſo in the third: then to leaue the whole coũtry at once without men, and ſtrength expoſed to ſuch certaine danger ?. No ſaith the Lord: come before me euery man thriſe a yeare, for no man ſhall deſire thy land, when thou ſhalt appeare before the LORD *Exodus*, 34. 24, himſelf would be the ſtrength of it at ỹ time, & ſo watch it as the enemy ſhould not ſo much as deſire it: the like we may obſerue in their gathering of Mannah euery day in ỹ morning w was not only an obediẽce vnto gods cõmandemẽt

A farre iourney of many daies trauel. A ſeruice of long continuance, ſeuen daies at a time, their wiues might be indangered, their virgins violated, their goods ſpoiled.

but a ſpecial reſemblance and ſhadow of ſeeking Ieſus Chriſt in ỹ parts of his worſhip. Now herein ſeemed to lie no ſmal danger towards them; For either the enimies w̃ were continually troubleſom vnto thē might take their camps whilſt the whole hoſt was abroad gathering Mannah, or elſe they might lye in ambuſh in the wildernes for the hoſt about ỹ place wher the Mannah fell: yet for al their danger (& notwithſtanding they had many ſkirmiſhes in ỹ wildernes) wee neuer read ỹ this was any diſaduantage vnto thē. The Lord ſo watched them & theirs, that neuer by their gathering of Mannah nor in that time and place they wer diſparaged, no nor ſet vpon: for the eye of the Lord is moſt vpon them ỹ ar neareſt vnto him. Set thy ſelfe to gather Mannah in the miniſtry thou ſhalt not faile of Gods protection. And this the Prophet *Dauid* in the ſecond place teacheth in the verſ following. For *God is the Sun and ſhield.* And hereby he prouoked himſelf often into the preſence of God in the aſſemblies, and the rather in that now he was ſo hunted out of euery corner;

and

and euery day brought him more danger then other, that there was often but a ſtep between him and death; hee had great cauſe to long after that defence and ſafety which the Lord reacheth out to ſuch as haue libertye with good heartes to worſhip before him in his Temple. Thirdly, ſtrong *conſolation* for al conditions of life, euen ſuch as otherwiſe would be moſt vncõfortable. For when the people of God are compaſſed with ſuch iudgements and terrors, whether without or within them, as they cannot tell what way to turne them; when changes of ſorrowes come thicke and threefold one in the neck of an other: when whole armies of temptations beſiege them; ſo as they ſee no way of iſſue & eſcape: here are they incouraged to ſet their eies vpon ỹ Lord; who pittying them as a father the child which he loueth; wil not ſuffer them to ſink in their ſorrow; but holds them vp by the chin, that they periſh not in their trouble. For heere come they to know 1. that the Lords manner is firſt to giue ſtrength, and then the burden ẅ ſhal not bee aboue that ſtrength. 2.

3 Comfort for all conditions.

that the Lord must rule in his house, and necessarily must administer out of his iustice as wel correction as reward, and draw euen his deare ones vnto him as well by the rods of men, as by the cords of loue; which is a singular prop vnto their patience. So as they can be wel contented vnder it. 3. ỳ though their troubles be neuer so great, yet he will deliuer them out of al in due seasō. 4 that he wil make these afflictions soueraign and wholesom vnto them; and turn euen their sufferings to their best;

Rom. 8. 28. *all things fall out to the best to them that loue God.* Thus the Lord maketh good his promise to such as conscionably seeke him in his ordinance, *as one whom his mother comforteth so shall you in* Ierusalem. Whereas if the word were not their comfort they were sure to perish in their trouble.

Isa 66. 13. Psal. 119. 92.

Besides here the people of GOD reape the comfort of their prayers; for as a King receiueth petitions at the Court; or as a maister of a family is ready to heare and receiue all the complaintes and requestes of his children and seruantes: euen so the

Lord

LORD in this houſe giueth free acceſſe vnto him-ſelfe; and for their incouragement herein freely promiſeth, that hee will bee ready to heare their prayers, behold their ſighs, put their teares into his bottle, ſend no man awaie emptie, and caſt none in the teeth for his importunity ſo it bee guided aright.

Seeing thererfore that heere are ſuch conſolations to bee attayned as the whole Worlde beſides cannot giue, nor take away; ſo certaine, ſo ſeaſonable, ſo ſpirituall, ſo perpetuall: Which of vs haue not as much reaſon to wiſh the fruition of ſuch a gratious preſence of GOD were it but for one day, aboue all other all our dayes as *Dauid* did? This holy man well knewe that one day was but ſhort in compariſon of many dayes: But yet their reioycing with the Church in the Church aſſemblyes for one daie was worthily to bee preferred before the reioycing of many dayes without the Church; in that the waight of this ioy recompenſed the ſhortnes of it

ſelfe

ſelf; & counteruailed the length of the other, being vnſpeakably glorious. This third priuiledge is that wch he in the third place mentioneth as a ſteele ſpur to his affection: where in the next verſ he addeth that the Lord is (*not onely the Sun & ſhield*) but *grace* in his church, that is, gratiouſly accepteth in his Chriſt, 1. the perſons, and then the prayers of ſuch as are aſſembled in ſpirit & truth to worſhip him and call vppon his name.

4. Eternal happines.

Fourthly, Bleſſednes and *ſaluation* wch is not ordinarily out of theſe aſſemblies to be attained. A true ſaying it is, that, none can haue God his father, that hath not the church for his mother, neither can any teſtifie himſelfe a childe of the Church; but by the dutiful acknowledgment of hir whenſoeuer God ſhewes hir face. Whē *Iacob* was awake out of his ſleepe in which the Lord had appeared vnto him: Hee ſaid, *This is the houſe of GOD, this is the gate of heauen*, in like manner may wee conceiue and ſpeake of theſe places in which it pleaſeth the *LORD* ſo gratiouſly to appeare vnto vs; this is no other then the gate; theſe are

Gen. 28. 17.

ſurely

ſurely the ſuburbes of heauen. Out of the Church is no ſaluation, whoſoeuer remained without the Arke, (a tipe of the viſible Church) was drowned. The Lord ſaueth none whom he firſt *addeth not vnto the Church*. And the Scriptures attribute ſaluation (but yet miniſterially) to the wombe, breſts, and lappe of the Church, which is *the Mother of vs all*. And of *Sion* is it ſayd, that *many are borne in her*. And this laſt was not the leaſt motiue which ſtirred in our holy Prophet theſe inſtant deſires. *The Lord is grace and glory*; not onely becauſe the Lord is the glory of his people, here and hereafter; Nor that onely in the Church the Lord reueileth his glorie, but alſo becauſe he leadeth his children vnto it by the meanes there by his wiſdome appointed.

Per portam ecclesiæ intramus in portam paradiſi Auguſt. de tempore ſerm. 137.

Gal. 4. 26.

Pſal. 87. 5.

Now conſidering the places whereon our feete ſtand are holy ground, the perſons preſent holy and glorious; the duties performed holy and ſpirituall; the priuiledges of Gods people ſo precious and aboundant in all theſe regardes, can we doe leſſe then wiſh our portions and ſhares in them? and doth

it

it not now ſeeme a moſt reaſonable and religious wiſh to ſpend if it were but one day here, rather then a thouſand elſe-where ? or ſhall wee ſtill neede many goads to prouoke vs to loue, or rejoyce in Ieruſalem, *where wee may thus ſuck and bee ſatiſfied with the breſt of her conſolation, where wee may milke out and bee delighted with the brightneſſe of her glory ?*

Iſa. 66. 11.

Vſe 1.

If wee would haue our hearts iuſtifie vs in this holy reioyſing, our labour muſt bee to ſee dayly further into theſe beauties of Gods houſe, which may rauiſh our hearts with the loue of it aboue all other places in the earth.

A good hart would turne their eye to the beauties of Gods houſe

The Scriptures not in a few places aduanceth and highly extolleth ſuch aſſemblies as wherein God and his people are mette together to the former purpoſes; and all that our hearts and affections might bee mooued to enquire and finde out ſuch excellencies here, as the mouth of the Lord himſelfe hath ſo frequently recommended vnto vs.

The

The Prophet *Isay* saith, that the house of the Lord is prepared in the top of the mountaines, and exalted aboue the hills. Which place may receiue some light by that comparison, which the Prophet *Dauid* maketh betweene Mount *Sion* and mount *Basan*, and many other great hills. *Why hoppe yee so yee hills? this is Gods hill.* By *Mountaines* are meant the greatest Empires, and most flourishing Kingdomes of the earth abounding with wealth and power; which all in *Basan* are made inferiour to *Sion*: not that either in spaciousnesse of ground, or multitude, or goodnesse of people, or strength, or riches, or outward pompe and glory, *Sion* was comparable to any of them: for the kingdome of *Israell* was the *least and fewest*, and as *badde* and *wicked* as any people vnder heauen: It was bounded and shutte vppe in a small modell and compasse of ground, and for strength and power, came farre short of the great kingdomes of *Assyria, Ægipt, &c.*

Isa. 2. 2.

Psal. 66. 16

Deut 7. 7. & 9. 4. 6.

How

How then was it ſo aduanced and exalted aboue the mountaines? ſurely herein. *This is Gods hill*; and ſo made high aboue all nations, in praiſe, name, and glory. Gods dwelling in it was the wealth, ſtrength and beauty, yea I adde the *bleſſedneſſe* of it: for *bleſſed is that land whoſe God is the Lord.* Thus alſo was *Capernaum* ſaid to be lifted vp vnto heauen, onely in regarde of the preſence, doctrine, and miracles of Chriſt. So in our *Bethels* God himſelfe is the beauty and glory of euery of them: his adminiſtration here farre excelling *Salomon* in all wiſdome, the owner of it being the true *Salomon*, the God of *Iſrael*, who as a great houſholder, out of his goodneſſe foſtereth, out of his wiſdome teacheth, out of his power ruleth, and out of his rich mercy tendreth the complaints and requeſts of euery one within his gates. In this houſe all the houſhould ſeruants haue one liuery and garment, the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt to cloath them; all feed at the ſelfe ſame table, and eate childrens bread: all haue one elder brother Ieſus Chriſt the firſt borne of many brethren:

brethren: all haue one sort of seruants, the Angels who not onely goe before them and at their heeles, but as a guard are pitched about them: all haue one inheritance, and become heyres and fellow heyres with Christ himselfe. The wisdome & glory of which whole administration if we could as well behold as the Queene of *Seba* did the orders in *Salomons* Court: we could not but account them blessed, that might here be admitted into place of seruice; to heare the wisdome of the King of glory, and Prince of peace, who dwelleth within these euerlasting doores: Which heauenly delights while men know not, no maruaile if they affect them not. But on the contrary, one comming to behold them in any euidence, as little maruaile is it, if with *Dauid* they would enioy them with exchange of all earthly pleasures. For who is it which hath neuer so little tasted of the goodnesse of God, that loues not the Lords habitation, and the place where his honor dwelleth? yee that thirsteth not after God and his presence, as the Hart brayeth after the Psal. 42. 1.

riuers

Vse. 2. riuers of water?

Secondly, if our hearts bee ſound in this reioyſing, then can wee not but in heart and affection ioyne our ſelues vpon all good occaſions vnto the Church of God in her meetings, as ſuch as would pertake of her priuiledges, for this is a note of a con-
Act. 2. 42. uerted perſon. The *beleeuers continued in the Apoſtles doctrine and fellowſhip, and breaking of bread and prayers.* And if ſuch multitudes of *ſundrie ſortes of people*, and ſuch as could not *finde their names in the genealogie*, came out of *Egipt*, and out of *Babilon* with the *Iſraelites*, onely becauſe they ſaw GODS bleſſing following that people: How much more ſhould wee bee prouoked to ioyne our ſelues to ſuch ſocieties as are aſſembled to worſhippe him in ſpirit and truth: ſeeing it is not any temporall bleſſing which runnes into our eye, but ſpirituall and eternall; neither any out-warde priuiledge, which wee alone may make account of (as they) but ſuch as is inwarde

and

and heauenly, yea ſuch as rayſeth vs vnto the condition of *the ſonnes of the liuing God*, Hoſe. 1. 10

But thoſe mens hearts are not right within them that neede but the wagging of a ſtrawe to keepe them from Church, much leſſe of thoſe who place their felicitie in turning away from GOD, from his ordinances, and the place of his true worſhippe, what-ſo-euer their pretences may bee. And heere it ſhall not bee amiſſe to meete with ſome of them, eſpecially ſuch as are ſcarcely to be mette with-all euen there where ſome writers haue to verye fruitefull purpoſe ſet them-ſelues to anſwere the moſt obiections of this kinde. Confut. Preachers plea.

1. And firſt to admoniſh ſuch as neede no other thing then theyr owne wilfulneſſe to excommunicate and baniſh them-ſelues from the houſe of God, and aſſemblies of the faithfull. Of theſe the firſt ſorte profeſſe themſelues touched with zeale of the glory of GOD: they haue obſerued Seperators.

the

the wilde beast of the Forrest to haue broken downe our hedge, throwne our pale to the ground; and with a prophane foote, troden downe and rooted vp all our holy things; they see no beauty, but all deformity and nakednesse in our Churches; which yet they will not vouchsafe that name; but sties of vncleane beasts, cages of filthy birds, and rudiments of *Babilon*. Thus they vexe themselues aboue measure, in seeking Ministers, callings, people of God, and Churches: and because they cannot finde a man in the market, they seperate from our assemblies.

It is inough for thy Church to be without spotte or wrinckle in heauen.

To which I answer, that though it be not the condition of our or any Church to be free from all blemish and spotte, yet is hee as blinde as a Mole, and palpably deluded, that can espy no beautie therein. What? is our Mother so black as shee hath no comlinesse? or because perhaps she wants some beautie, hath shee lost her face? sure I am, that where there is the face of God in the midst of his people there is a face of the Church: and where God is present, there is the house of God: But in our assem-

assemblies wee haue God present teaching his people: yea wee haue Christ present in the word and Sacraments, euen crucified before our eyes, who is the image of his Father. Wee haue the presence of the blessed spirit of God (which they cannot deny) enlightning the vnderstandings, softning the hearts, comforting the consciences; powring forth his graces of faith, of hope, of loue, and that in aboundant manner in this his owne ordinance vpon many thousand soules which are dayly added vnto the Church: and therefore whatsoeuer wee yet want, let vs thankfully acknowledge that wee want not the presence of God, nor the house of God, nor the face of God, before which his people present themselues with liberty, and protection ioyning together in the pure worship of his name, to his endlesse praise, and their owne vnspeakable comfort.

Howsoeuer therefore Sathan worketh according to his accustomed craft to trouble our sight; let vs bee more wise and wary then to bee ledde from the beholding of the face of God, and

so wilfully depart from this our reioy-sing.

And let such as are so readye to bee mislead, acknowledge with thank-fulnesse their spirituall father that be-gat them to God: their Mother the Church that bare them: her brests the Testaments that gaue them milke, and that shee is not since their birthe so weakened, but that shee is as able to preserue them as to bring them forth: and to feede them with stron-ger meate, so to bring them to their tallnesse in Christ.

Recusants. 2. An other sorte of them who wilfully by excommunicating them-selues out of our assemblies, deliuer them-selues to Sathan, are *Popish min-ded persons*, who because they cannot see neither their little breaden God in our Sacraments; nor their wooden guilded Gods in our worshippe: and becausse they cannot heare GOD speake Latin in our Churches; nor our Ministers inuocating Saints and An-gels in our Prayers: therefore sure heere are no foote-steppes of GOD:

nor

nor ſo much as the rudements of his worſhippe and ſeruice: hence they refuſe all communication with vs in worde, Sacraments, Prayers, and Church ſeruice; and ioyne themſelues in a worſhippe wherein they neede not bee at the paines to ſeeke a God ſitting ſo high as in the heauens, ſeeing they can haue him at home in a boxe; who if hee chance to putrifie or corrupt; or bee deuoured of Mice, they can haue a new one made by the Prieſt and Baker together euery day.

Papiſts muſt ſee their God becauſe they cannot beleeue him.

A worſhipp in which if they haue no knowledge, no faith of their owne, the knowledge and faith of the Church will beſteede them; nay if they can beleeue as the Church beleeues, although they knowe not what the Church dooth beleeue: a worſhippe wherein if they neyther can praye them-ſelues, nor yet gette CHRIST to bee an interceſſor for them: yet they canne procure a thouſand Mediatours beſides of

Implicit faith.

Saints, Angels; and if these should faile, they haue the Virgin *Mary* at a dead lift to command her sonne in the right of a Mother to clemencie. A worship wherein if they can neither abstaine from sinne, nor yet repent of it in truth, yet if they can pay well, a little pennance shall acquit them. A worship wherein if they neuer were good, nor did good: yet their Church hath a treasurie, which (vpon another condition,) can supply them of good workes, which some man who in his life time was too good bequeathed to such purposes. Oh vaine worship, and full of delusion, not more plausible to the corrupt nature of man, then dishonorable to the high Maiestie of God!

And were these things true, who could blame him that hath resolued to liue and dye a Papist? but alas that poore soules should bee held in such chaines of darkenesse and death! The Lord in his good time open the prison doores, and strike off the boults from so many as belong to him, that they

they may ſee them-ſelues ſet free from ſuch woefull eſtate, as wherein they laye bound by Sathan and his inſtruments euen vnder damnation.

And yet more fearefull is the condition of ſuch of them as haue had their error diſcouered by the cleere ſunne-ſhine of the Goſpell, and yet are ſetled vpon their lees, vpon no better ground then like ſo many *Barzillaes*, that they haue beene ſo long accuſtomed to the worſe, that they deſpiſe the better; their ſences are paſt them, they cannot taſte the truth, they cannot ſee the wiſdome of GOD ſhining round about them, they cannot heare the voyce of the charmer; in *Gilead* they will dye, before they will chooſe to liue in *Ieruſalem*: in ſuperſtition they began; they continue in error; they will dye in wilfull blindneſſe, and will bee buryed in the graues of the idolatrie of their fore-fathers. 2.Sam. 19. 35.

The Lord once appeared to *Iacob*, but hee was not aware of it, the Gen.28.16

reason was becauſe hee was a ſleepe: the Text ſaith. *Then Iacob awooke out of his ſleepe and ſaid, ſurely the Lord is in this place and I was not aware*, and this is the caſe of many a ſuperſtitious perſon.

God appeareth vnto his *Iſraell* in *Bethel* in his houſe: but they are not aware of him, they ſee him not, they will not beleeue hee is among vs. But what is the reaſon? not becauſe hee is not there; but becauſe they are a ſleepe and in their dreames; but if euer GOD awaken them, they will bee able to vtter *Iacobs* confeſſion: and vpon better aduiſe to ſay:

Verſe. 17. *How fearefull is this place? It is no other but the houſe of God, and this is the gate of heauen.*

3. Others are more prophane and ſecure, then wilfull and refractarie, and though not ſo much hatred, yet little more loue bewrayeth it ſelfe in them then in former ſortes: and leaſt they ſhould ſeeme alſo to bee madde with-out reaſon; they are not without ſundry coulours and pretenſes which they thinke are reaſonable inough,

inough to abſent them-ſelues from our aſſemblies. And therefore they aske; What can wee not bee Chriſtians vnleſſe wee trotte ſo often to Church? haue wee not the Scriptures and other good bookes at home to reade vppon, can wee not praye at home? Ob.

Anſ. They may aſwell aske; Can wee not haue an harueſt vnleſſe wee haue a ſeede time; and raine, yea the firſt and latter raine? or can wee not liue vnleſſe wee haue meate? I ſay no: No more canſt thou bee a Chriſtian vnleſſe thou take the ordinary meanes appointed by GOD, and vnleſſe thou ſubiect thy ſelfe to that pollicy and order which God hath ſet in his Church. Wouldeſt thou goe for a good ſubiect, and yet not ſubmit thy ſelfe to any of the Kings lawes? God hath ſet vs a publicke miniſterie in his Church, and hath appointed Paſtors, & teachers for thy gathering if thou belongeſt to life: and is it meet that any priuate exerciſe ſhould croſſe ſo publicke ordinances? Good chriſtians cannot be heauie to the Church.

No the wisdome of GOD admitteth no such inconuenience in making his lawes, and deliuering his orders vnto his Church.

Ob. But though it cannot bee denied, but it is some-times good to goe heare a Sermon: yet what neede so much preaching? what, would men haue vs Saints on earth? our fore-fathers (who wee hope are well, and wish our selues no better) neuer were troubled with Sermons, and our selues haue liued some thirtie, fortie, fiftie, or sixtie yeares in good case and credit, and yet were neuer so forward to run to Sermons; wee hope to GOD wee can learne to loue God aboue all, and our neighbour as our selues, and pray to God, and carry good hearts to Godward without all this a doe.

A needlesse allegation that so much preaching is not needfull.

Answ. Can I beleeue any man that saith he seeth, when I see him shut his eyes? can I thinke that a man hath any true knowledge of God, who desireth not to growe in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord IESVS CHRIST? How can I beleeue that that man is in earnest, or if hee bee

that hee is in his wittes that ſhall thus plead againſt his life; I hope I haue eaten meate ynough heretofore, and got ſtrength ynough and now I need no more: and therefore I will neuer eate more, nor drinke more while I liue: if a frantick man ſhould come to ſuch concluſions, any man might ſay well thou ſhalt then liue but a while. Doſt thou not ſee this holy Prophet who was aduanced both in knowledg and holynes aboue the moſt liuing; and dwelt as an Angell in the World; yet did not he acknowledge himſelfe greatly to ſtand in need of ſtirring vp by theſe meanes giuen of God for that end? And yet thou a man of little or no faith, a nouice and pettie in the ſchoole of Chriſt, if yet ỹ euer entredſt into it, art ſo ful and complete as thou canſt or needeſt go no further.

The ignorance of our age more dangerous then of our fore-fathers, theirs was ſimple, ours affected.

As for thy fore-fathers they had not the meanes as thou haſt: and if any of them periſhed without them, yet their ſtripes are fewer then thine ſhall bee who contemneſt them. If they had had ỹ meanes offred, it is likely they would haue beene more fruitfull in them, or if

If not, it had not bene for their eaſe (no more then thine) to haue diſpiſed them. And lamentable it is to ſee how men ſuffer ſatan to ouer-reach them in a matter of ſuch moment as is their free-hold in heauen. If any man had houſe, land or legacy befalling him, would he reaſon thus? Why I care not for it I haue liued now 40. or 50. yeares well ynough & in good credit without it; I am too old now to change my eſtate although for ỹ better; neuer man made ſuch a fooliſh reaſon: & yet ſuch fooles are men that vppon this ground they ſtand againſt their greateſt, ſpiritual and eternall good. Wheras if they had the wiſdome of men in them, they ſhould rather thus conclud: haue I al this while liued without knowledge of God, faith in Chriſt, conſciẽce of my waies? oh it is high time now to awake out of ſleepe.

Not eaſily lerned to loue God aboue al & thy neighbour as thy ſelfe.

And to ſuch as can eaſily learn to loue God aboue all and the neighbour as themſelues; it is not a thing ſo ſoon lerned as they pretend. Is euery man a good maſon or carpenter that can ſay, I know as much as the beſt workeman can teach or tell me, to build an houſe

houſe is but to lay the foundation, and lay on the roof: or is he therfore a good husbandman ỳ can ſay, I know as much as the beſt husbandman can teach me; for what is husbandry elſe but to ſow and to reape? But heere a meane conceit will reply and ſay, yea but there are very many thinges required before a man can do either of theſe two workes: which if you know not you can neuer bee commendable neither in the one nor the other. So I ſay a number of thinges go before the loue of God and the neighbor, as faith, repentance, prayer, knowledge of Gods will and word, knowledge of Chriſt in whome our workes muſt finde acceptance: & more theſe duties of loue muſt bee expreſſed in infinite actions through the whole life, all which if a man bee not particularly inſtructed in, his loue of God and his neighbor is but in *word and tongue*, but there is noe deed nor truth in either.

And for their prayer which the hope they can acceptably performe, the truth is, let them pray and faſt to it, ſo long as they *turne their eares from hearing the*

law

law: ſuch *prayers are* not only reiected but *abhominable.* As acceptable as the feruent prayers of thoſe deuout women that would haue ſtoned *Paul.* And laſtly, wheras their hearts ar ſo good to God-ward, in that alſo ȳ ſpirit of God giueth them the lye, who affirmeth *that without knowledge the minde is not good.*

Pro. 28. 9.

Ob: But if I had an Angell to teach me, or ſome more excellent and powerfull meanes then this of hearing a weak and fraile man; then I would heare, beleeue and obey.

Anſ: This indeed is an old ſubtiltie of the diuell by which hee hath in all ages mightely hindered the worke of the word in the heartes of vnbeleeuers.

Gods ordinance to teach man by man, not by an Angell.

The prophets them-ſelues ſeemed in the eyes of the people *too ſmall to raize vppe the tribes of* Iacob, *and to reſtore the deſolations of* Iſrael. And the rich mans brethren would rather bee taught by *one from the dead,* then by *Moyſes and the Prophets.* And therefore ſeeing this deceipt ſecretly ſtealeth vppon many a man; and is not ſo euidently diſcouered

Iſay, 49. 6.

as

as it profitably may bee; I will indeuor the more fully to manifeſt both the folly and falſhood of it.

And firſt I ſay this is a fooliſh conceit of reſtleſſe ſpirits, who yet take vppon them to bee wiſer then God himſelfe: who (howſoeuer the word might ſeeme to carry much more authority in the mouth of an Angell, then of an ordinary Miniſter, who is but a weake man yet) herein bewraied his infinite. 1. *mercy*. 2. *loue*. 3. *wiſdom*, in eſtabliſhing this holy ordinance, & no other perpetually to continue in his church vnto the end of the world.

Gods mercy herein.

His *mercy* ſhineth out in this; that knowing our infirmity, and wherof we are made, it pleaſeth him to condiſcend vnto it. Hee might by terrible voyces, out of lightnings, thunders and earthquakes, ſuch as would breake the rocks them-ſelues before him, force our obedience, or ſend his Angels furniſhed with power and ſtrength for the preſent execution of vengeance vppon all ſuch as deny their preſent obedience to their word: but in compaſſion vnto vs hee chooſeth to teach vs by a ſtil voyce

voyce ; by a more familar and fitte instruction for vs , euen by such as our selues , of our owne nature : farre meeter for our weakenesse then if he should either in his owne Maiestie teach vs; or by natures so farre superiour vnto vs as the Angels. And this appeared plainely in giuing the law, when the people once hearing the voyce of God came trembling to *Moyses* , and made requeſt in theſe wordes. *Talke thou with vs and wee will heare , but lette not God talke with vs , leaſt wee die :* and it was generally receiued of old ; that if any man did either heare this *voyce*; or *ſee the face of the great God* : the great glory would ſo ouerwhelme him, that ſurely hee could not liue after it. Yea *Moyſes* him-ſelf could not haue beheld the back-partes of the LORD, if the LORD had not *hidde him in the cleft of a Rocke* , and *couered him with his hand till he paſſed by*.

Exod, 20. 19.

Dut, 5. 26. Iudg, 13. 22.

Gods loue herein.

His loue towards man manifeſteth it ſelfe heerein : that hee vouchſafeth to putte his voyce in the mouth of man , rather then of Angels. What an aduancement is it to the nature of man, that

that the high GOD ſhould ſanctifie their tongues, to deliuer his good pleaſure to the ſonnes of men? to betruſt them with ſuch high miſteries, and matters of ſuch bleſſed and *ſauing* vſe to *them-ſelues and others?* 1 Tim, 4. 16.

His *wiſdome* diſcouereth it ſelfe in this ordinance ſundry waies. 1. In that teaching man by man hee preuenteth the danger of deceipt and deluſion which wee ſhould lye open vnto if we ſhould bee taught by reuelations, or viſions, or appearance of Angels. For Satan is an Angel of light; hee can alſo aſſume him a body, and in it by Gods permiſſion broch lies, and as though he were among the ſonnes of God, father them vpon God. Bleſſed be that wiſedom of God ẏ hath deliuered vs a more certain word of the Prophets & Apoſtles, ſhutting out al rouing *Enthuſiaſmes* & reuelations not contained within it ſelfe; and hath ſette vppe a Miniſtry in which his Church ſhall bee taught by man, ſubiect indeed to error but farre leſſe dangerous then the former: in that wee haue a certaine rule to trye the Spirites by

The wiſedom of god herein.

whether

whether they bee of God or no: according to which rule and worde if they ſpeake not, there is no light in them.

Second, hereby hee ſheweth the mighty power of the word which (although it ſeeme in the hand of a weake man, a fooliſh meane of mens conuerſion) yet *by this fooliſhnes of preaching the Lord ſaueth ſuch as beleeue:* This *Paul* teacheth. *VVe haue this treaſure in earthen veſſels, that the excellency of that power might bee of God* (that is knowne to bee of God) *and not of vs:* and this one thing hath confounded all the wiſdome of fleſh, to ſee ſuch *weake* and *vile* and *diſpiſed* thinges bring ſuch great things to paſſe.

2. Cor. 4. 7.

27.

1. Cor. 1. 27.

And thus all the glory of the worke of conuerſion, redoundeth vnto God, to whome indeed of right it appertaineth. Thus the Apoſtles vſually turned off that praiſe & glory which men prepoſterouſly would haue faſtned vppon them; that all the power of their word and workes might bee aſcribed vnto God. When *Peter* had healed a Cripple that lay at the beautifull gate of the Temple, all the people came running,

Act. 3. 12

and

and gazing on him and *Iohn*, too much admiring their persons from whome they had seene such an euident worke: which when *Peter* perceiued, he checketh their ignorance. *Yea men of* Israel, *why looke you so stedfastly on vs as though we by our own power or godlines had made this man go?* And wisheth them to look vpward to *the God of* Abraham, Isaac *and* Iacob, *who had glorified his sonne Iesus; in whose name they had done this miracle.*

So likewise when *Paul* at *Lystra* had healed an other lame man: the people conceiuing that the *Gods were come downe in the likenesse of men*, brought their Buls with garlands, & their chiefe Priest to offer sacrifice to him and *Barnabas*: which when the Apostles saw, they rent their clothes and staid them from ỹ horrible Idolatry. *Oh men why doe yea these things? VVee are euen men subiect to the like passions that ye bee*, and so proceeded to preach the true God, and his son Christ vnto them. Euen so when men behold such mighty power in that word which is dispenced by men subiect to the same passions with Act. 14. 11. 15.

them-ſelues; that it is able to conquer the whole world and bring it to the knowledge and obedience of chriſt; to ſubdue nature and corruption of it; yea battereth the ſtrongeſt holds of ſatan and deſtroyeth his Kingdome: eaſily may they conceiue there is more power with it then any can bee in ſuch poore men, and that is indeed the power & ſtrong arme of almightie God.

3. The wiſedome of GOD hereby would proue and try our obedyence, whether we will heare his Miniſters beeing men like our ſelues, no otherwiſe then wee would heare him-ſelfe, or Chriſt, or an Angel ſpeaking from heauen. Whether we wil receiue his Miniſters as the *Galatians* did *Paul*. Hee came and preached in the frailtie and weakneſſe of fleſh, yet they diſpiſed him not, nor abhorred him; but receiued him as an Angel of God, yea as Chriſt him-ſelfe: not conſidering ſo much the meanes of their perſons, as ỹ truth of their doctrin, which muſt be as carefully receiued, and as certainly held as if Angels from heauen, or Chriſt him-ſelfe

Gala, 4. 14.

him-selfe did deliuer it. Yea the Apostle *Paul* is peremptory that if an Angel should come from heauen and crosse any whit of his doctrine by teaching either a contrary, or another doctrin then he did, he must be held accursed. Gal, 1. 8.

Ob. It will bee heere alledged that indeed they might so certainly receiue *Pauls* doctrine on his word, for he was priuiledged that he could not er in deliuering it as our ordinary ministers may.

An. To which I answer that euen we (secondarily) are to be heard and receiued with the same respect and certainty so farre forth as wee follow and deliuer to the Church the doctrine of the Apostles. For herein we also are the *Angels of the Lord of hostes, and Ambassadors in the stead of Christ.* Malac, 2. 7, 2 cor, 5. 21.

And all the partes of the Ministry in our hands (wee following the word) are as sure and infallible, as if an Angel or Christ from heauen should execute them. If we threaten it is as if ỹ Lion of ỹ Tribe of *Iudah* should roare: if we cõfort it is as sure & sweet to the beleeuing soule as if the Angels should comfort vs as they did Christ in his

agonie. Yea or Christ him-selfe from heauen, as hee did the women that sought him after hee was risen. If wee admonish, exhort, perswade, it is all one as if Christ should do it, who hath said: *he that heareth you, heareth me.* And in euery of these *the sheepe of Christ heare his voyce*, who is the great pastor of the sheepe, and not so much ours, and with the spouse of Christ saith: *this is the voice of my welbeloued.*

Iohn, 10.

4. Hereby the wisedom of God would giue vs to conceiue that seeing wee are taught by man; the one half (as ỹ Queen of *Sebah* spoke of *Salomon*) of the blessednesse prepared for them ỹ loue God is not, nor cannot while we liue here be made known to vs; seeing it cannot enter into the heart of man, much lesse be vttered with his tongue. And therfore we should raize vp our hearts after that blessed reuelation, wherein Christ himselfe shall become our teacher, and reueale vnto vs our full happinesse.

The office of Angels is not to preach but to set men & protect them in Preaching.

And further as the mercy, loue and wisedome of God hath established this ordinance, so also it will not be amisse in a word to see how hee hath euer maintained

maintained this his owne order in his Church.

And first the Angels haue another office designed them by God in the Church then to vsurpe the Ministry. And although the LORD imployed them in priuate messages vnto priuate persons; yet I remember not that euer in the publicke Ministry their office was to preach, but to set men on preaching, and preserue them in teaching: we read that they were to reueale from God to his Prophets some part of his will: which the Prophets were to deliuer to the Church, but the Church was not to depend on the ministry of the Angels but on ỹ Ministry of man. One Angel commaundeth another to teach *Zachary* a prophecy which he must deliuer vnto the church concerning the building and repayring of the Citty and Temple, *Go tell this young man*. But nether of the Angels might publish this prophecie vnto the church. Zach. 2. 4.

So the Eunuch sitting in his Chariot reading the Scriptures and not knowing what hee read; an Angel sendeth *Philip* to teach him. But why Act. 8. 26.

did not the Angel teach the Eunuch him-ſelfe? Was it becauſe he could not? Or if he could might not hee in ſuch an extraordinary time haue ſaued *Philip* that tedious iourney between *Gaza* & *Azotus*, which were diſtant a ſunder about ſix & thirty miles? Yes hee could haue taught him, but hee would not, nor might not; but ſendeth him an ordinary meanes, teaching vs that if there be a *Philip* wee muſt from him ſeek inſtruction, and not from the mouth of an Angel.

Act, 16. 9. In like manner an Angel in a viſion ſtood before *Paul like a man of* Macedonia, *& praied him ſaying, come & helpe vs in* Macedonia; which was a calling of *Paul* to teach that people in the way of God. But why did not the Angell him-ſelfe in whoſe mouth the Word would ſeem to carry much more authority, and who would haue beene much more reſpected then *Paul*; why doth not hee go and preach in *Macedonia*? Surely becauſe it was as farre as his calling extended to ſet *Paul* to this buſineſſe; and he would not meddle with a calling deſtinated vnto man.

The

The Lord Ieſus him-ſelfe when he vndertook that function in which hee declared himſelf the chiefe Doctor of his church, would firſt take fleſh and become man; and in that fleſh declare his fathers name to his brethren. To which purpoſe the Apoſtle ſaith: that God *in theſe laſt daies hath ſpoken by his ſon:* that is very familiarly by his ſon made man. Yea further when he was aſcended into his glory, hee would from thence ſhew him-ſelfe powerfull to *Paul* to the caſting him to the ground, to ỹ humbling of his heart by terror & aſtoniſhment, and ſo to the preparing and fitting of him vnto inſtructió: but when he comes to be taught he *ſendeth him into the Citty:* he leaueth al ỹ function vnto *Ananias.* Wherin he expreſly in his own example teacheth that it was his good pleaſure that, that miniſtry of Paſtors, and teachers which hee hadde a little before his aſcenſion eſtabliſhed in the Church, for the gathering together of his Saintes, for the worke of the Miniſtry and the edification of the body of Chriſt ſhould bee inuiolably

Act, 9. 6.

Eph, 4. 11, 13.

preſerued in the Church till his comming againe, wherein wee ſhall all meete together in the vnity of the faith and knowledge of the ſonne of GOD, vnto a perfect man and vnto the meaſure of the age of the fulneſſe of Chriſt.

Vntrue that thoſe who would bee taught by Angels would beleeue.

And laſtly as we haue already ſufficiently ſhewed the folly of ſuch who wil needs be wiſe aboue and againſt God, ſo alſo in one word the Scripture ſheweth vs how falſe that is which they alledge. For thoſe who haue *Moyſes* and the Prophets and will not beleeue thē, *neither would they beleeue if one ſhoulde come from the dead.* So we ſay that thoſe who will not beleeue the Lord ſpeaking in our Miniſtery, lette an Angel come from heauen, lette a diuell come from hell, yet will they not beleeue. And the reaſon is plaine; becauſe in the begetting of faith wee muſt not conſider the naked word; but as it is ioyned and accompanied with the ſpirit of GOD whoſe worke properly it is. Now ſeeing that the ſpirit ordinarily worketh in the meanes appointed

appointed by God; it followeth that who-ſoeuer deſpiſeth the meanes in which the ſpirit worketh, wanteth that ſpirit of God which ordinarily worketh not without thoſe meanes, which ſpirit ſo long as they want, they would not beleeue Angels nor men, dead nor liuing, neither *Moſes*, nor the Prophets, neither *Peter* nor *Paul*, no nor Chriſt himſelfe if he were liuing againe vpō the face of the earth. And thus hauing ſomwhat more largely ſatiſfied ỳ allegation, we come to take out of the wayes of two ſorts of proteſtants ſuch Lions as they faine, to lye betweene them and the Church. The former ſort are idle and lazie Proteſtants, that are ſo farre from being at the coſt of ſeeking and ſending for the worde: that when it commeth to ſeeke them, and freely offereth it ſelfe vnto them; yet will they not diſeaſe them-ſelues to ſtirre ouer their threeſholds for it. Saluation commeth almoſt euery day euen into their houſes, but they by ſhutting it out of doores make themſelues vnworthy of it, nay rather they will liue ſtarke beggars, and die in their ſpirituall pouertie,

Obiections of idle and lazie proteſtants.

pouertie, then receiue our treasures offred them freely. And truly too common is the experience of the lamentable fruites hereof in very many (in their owne and others account) Christians, whose hearts and loues are full fraught with noysome lusts threatning destruction; that the field of *Salomons* sluggard was neuer more ouer-growne with weedes and thistles, and nettles; then the thoughts and courses of these idle and sluggish Protestants with weedes of earthlinesse, voluptuousnesse, pride, enuie, atheisme, hypocrisie, and such other not a few, most noysome both for their sight, and sent vnto God and his people; and all is because their sinfull negligence suffereth them not to come vnder Gods pruning knife in the ministery of the word.

Ob. But that wee may see that idlenesse hath sewed her selfe some pillows to lay her head on; they alleadge it is an vnreasonable wearisome thing to bee tyed to two sermons euery Sabboth day, and perhaps to one beside in the weeke day: they know those (whom they trust to God come to heauen) and

yet

yet haue ſermons but once a moneth at the moſt, or once in the quarter, and one ſermon well learned, were farre better then all this preaching.

Anſw. To which I anſwer: firſt; if ſuch men and women conceiued aright of this ordinance of God, and that in it the Lord of this great houſe had appointed vs his ſtewards to breake vnto his family the bread of life; they would bee farre enough from ſuch prophane reaſonings, ſauouring ſo rankely of the fleſh. For did wee euer heare a man in his wittes reaſon thus madly? why I hope wee may liue with a great many fewer meales, then two euery day. I hope to eate meate once in a moneth, or once in a quarter were very ſufficient; and one meale well eaten were better then all theſe meales. Now if wee would thinke him mad that in earneſt ſhould thus reaſon againſt his life: how can wee thinke him any better, that vpon no other ground is reſolued to ſtarue his ſoule being his better part? which yet no leſſe needeth his dayly bread then the bodye doth. The Iewes muſt go forth euery morning to

ſeeke

seeke Mannah, and to gather it; which they did cheerefully: for although they some-times vnthankfully fell out (like children with their meate,) yet it seemes they grudged not their labour of gathering it dayly: nay whereas they were commanded to gather it only on the sixe dayes, and in the sixt day double for it selfe and the seauenth, yet they runne out the seauenth day too, against the commandement to gather it. God might haue giuen them an harueſt of Mannah once a yeare, as hee doth of graine vnto vs, or once a quarter, or once a moneth: but his wisdome saw it good to put them to more paines to gather it once a day. And wherefore? not onely becauſe hee would haue them depend vpon him for their daily bread: but alſo becauſe it was a type of Christ himselfe, who is that *true bread which came downe from heauen*: whome both they and all beleeuers were dayly to hunger after, and dayly to seeke in such means as himselfe hath appointed: as whoſe obtaining and finding is well worth our dayly paines and induſtry. And surely the very Iewes

Exo.16.27

Ioh.6.48.

shall

ſhall riſe vp in iudgement againſt all ſuch Chriſtians who will bee at no paines to ſeeke and finde Ieſus Chriſt the true bread of life, of whom whoſoeuer taſteth hee ſhall liue for euer: whereas the other were ſo painfull, without reaſonings to meete with that foode which was but a ſhadow leading vnto him: and of which our Sauiour ſaith; *Your Fathers eate Mannah in the wilderneſſe and are dead.* Ioh.8.49

Ancient beleeuers at more paine then we.

Secondly conſider whether the ancient beleeuers came to heauen ſo eaſily as our daintie Proteſtants meane to doe. Wee read that thoſe who were to worſhip in the old Teſtament, muſt riſe and get them out of their houſes, and build altars vnto the Lord: they muſt bee both at paines and coſtes in the ſeruice of their God. So did *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Iacob*, and the Patriarches: and after them all the while that the ceremoniall law ſtood in force, euery male muſt thrice a yeare appeare before the Lord at *Ieruſalem*, were his dwelling neuer ſo remote or diſtant from the temple: yea they could goe marching forward with-out fainting through droughts Gen.12.7.8 & cap.26. 25.& cap. 35.3.

droughts and droppes, and would not giue ouer vntill they mette the Lord in *Sion*. Now if they tooke so much paines to seeke Christ in shadowes and obscurity in comparison; it is surely worth our double paines to enioy the substance, truth, and shining brightnesse of Christ, as at this day wee doe through the blessing of GOD in admirable euidence and cleerenesse. But although the Lord hath granted vs liberty to make shorter cuttes, and neede not so tire out our selues in wearie pilgrimage to seeke his face, this is our condemnation that wee will not scarce goe out of our doores to meete with our GOD. The Queene of *Saba* that measured so many miles to heare the wisdome of *Salomon*, shall certainely rise vppe in iudgement against our people, who hauing a greater then *Salomon* here, are so farre from admiring, that they despise and contemne his wisdome.

But not to goe further in this point where bee the spirits of the faithfull martyrs of the former age, who haue passed the fire and water, and sword,

and

and banishment, and all to enioy our liberties, which a number of vs (their posteritie) count so slightly of as of the paring of our nailes?

Yea, where are become our home-borne, and ancient professors, who in the beginnings of the Gospell haue accounted foure, sixe, tenne, or more miles, a small Sabboth dayes iourney to heare a Sermon? such sweetnesse they found in the word, such a sweete face of God they beheld in his house, that they would haue gone a foote, nay bare-foote, rather then haue missed of that comfort. Surely the Lord hath either taken away ancient professors without succession; or else our eyes doe see a fearefull apostacie.

Thirdly, consider here whether euer any idolaters were so idle and secure in the worshippe of their false Gods, as many Christians professing the worshippe of the true GOD. And heere I might marshall the rankes of olde and latter ones, to whome no labours, no paines, no losses were accounted tedious or burdensome: euen while they offered their

Idolaters more painfull in their Idolatrie then we in the truth.

their ſweat and bloud alſo in ſacrifice to the Diuell. What ſhall I ſpeake of thoſe who mingled the pittifull cryes of their tender children with their Muſicke, while they were caſt into the fire to bee burnt vp in ſacrifice vnto the idoll *Molec*? what of the trauells and paines of the Scribes and Phariſies, that would compaſſe ſea and land to make a *Proſelite*? What of Baals Prieſts lancing and cutting their fleſh, before their idoll?

The blinded Papiſts at this day whip them-ſelues, make their faces leane with faſting, waſte and conſume their bodies with tedious pilgrimages to ſee ſome dead and rotten bones, and viſit ſome apiſh idoils: ſhall now theſe ſatanicall ſeruices bee ſo auaileable to harden the vnbeleeuer againſt any croſſes and bitterneſſe; that they will refuſe no paine to goe to hell? and ſhall not the Lords owne ordinances and true religion carry ſo much power with them, as to bring thoſe who profeſſe them-ſelues his people out of their gates to knowe the right waye to heauen?

Fourth-

Fourthly what doth this heauineſſe vnto theſe ordinances argue but hearts out of heart with the beſt deſires? for what we loue and deſire, no paines ſeemeth painfull for it. Many of theſe ſame perſons will bee well content to toyle day by day, fare hard, breake their ſleepe, eate the bread of carefulneſſe; & all to lay a little money and wealth together; and ſome-times they ſcarce knowe for whome: and yet all this paines from day to day, is but a pleaſure vnto them, becauſe their hearts and affections are carryed vnto and ſet vpon things below. In like manner did the loue of God and Chriſt take vp the heart of any man (as euery member of the true Church is ſicke of this loue) the ſweetneſſe of the exerciſes of religion, in which it is more and more conueyed into beleeuing ſoules, would bee ſweeter then wine: that is, then moſt taſtefull outward delights. Nay this loue would ſhew it ſelfe ſtronger then death, nothing but death (if death it ſelfe) can diſſolue it; much water cannot quench it, many floods cannot drowne it: Cant. 8. 6.

that is; Many croſſes, afflictions, tri-alls cannot vtterly ouer-come or extinguiſh it. Yea a mans whole ſubſtance will bee contemned in regarde of it. This ſparckle of heauenly fire and feruencie will conſtraine a man, to cleaue vnto the Lord in his ordinance, and groweth in time to ſuch a burning deſire of the glory of God as is able to carry a man beyond himſelfe, yea euen to conſume him, as *Dauids* zeale to Gods houſe did conſume him.

A glaſſe for ſecure chriſtians to ſee their danger.

And would to God all ſuch ſecure Chriſtians would at length begin to conceiue of their danger, which is fearfull to ſuch eyes as can behold it. For firſt, they are for the preſent deſtitute of the ſpirit of God, and ſo of all ſauing graces, and lye vnder a fearefull damnation. Which truth is euident, in that whereſoeuer the ſpirit of God delighteth to dwell, there hee ſtirreth vp the heart to ſome good meaſure of cheerefulneſſe in well-dooing, and keepeth it in a readineſſe, and preparedneſſe to euery good worke. For the office of the ſpirit is not onely to enlighten the eye of the ſoule, that it can behold

hold the beauties of Gods houſe, which it could neuer prie into before: but alſo to worke the will, and make it of vnwilling a willing wil. So as if before the preſence of the ſpirit a man were as loth to heare, pray, read, as a Beare to the ſtake; now he is changed by that ſpirit which will not be idle: and is become a man wanting often power and abilitie; but to wil that which is good is preſent with him: the reaſonings of the fleſh, are partly ſubdued: the vnreadineſſe which foiled his good duties before is in part foiled, & according to the meaſure of knowledge and faith, is the meaſure of his obedience daily increaſed: which things whoſoeuer hee bee that findeth them not in himſelfe, hee hath not the ſpirit of Chriſt, and conſequently is none of his.

2. They are lead by the ſpirit of ſathan who ruleth in the hearts of the diſobedient, whoſe old pollicie it is by this very perſwaſion of eaſe, to keepe ſuch from the pure worſhip of God, as hee would make ſeruiceable in all manner of vnrighteouſneſſe. When the Lord had commanded all *Iſraell* that

they ſhould appeare before him to worſhip him in ſpirit and truth at *Ieruſalem*: the diuell deuiſed a tricke, of which hee made *Ieroboam* his inſtrument, which indeed turned to the corruption of all the ten tribes with moſt horrible idolatrie. He pitties the paines of the people; and it *is too much for you to goe vp to Ieruſalem.* It is a more eaſie courſe and cutte to make two Calues, and ſet vp one at *Dan*, and an other at *Bethel*, and worſhip there. By this argument drawne from their eaſe, hee wonne all the people of God from their allegeance and ſeruice of their true GOD, to the worſhip of two Calues: and yet all was but out of pollicie, for hee feared if the people ſhould *goe to Ieruſalem to worſhip, that their hearts would bee turned to their LORD euen to* Rehoboam. Euen ſo the Diuell hauing taken captiue vnder his power ſuch as are wilfullye departed from GOD, hath no waye to keepe them vnder his girdle, but by keeping them from ſacrifizing at *Ieruſalem*, hee feareth if they ſhould diligentlye frequent

1. King. 12. 28.

Verſ. 27.

the

the holy assemblies, and ioyne with other of the people of GOD in the word, prayer and Sacraments, that by this meanes they would returne to their naturall Lord. And therefore hee dayly suggesteth and perswadeth them to fauour them-selues, it is too great paines to goe to Church, you can pray at home, read at home, goe some time to Church to auoyde danger of lawe, and reproche of men, and it is enough. And as hee then preuailed, that *the people went euen to Dan*, so at this day, a number make Chappels of ease of their owne houses; others can pray as well (as their horses I had like to haue sayd, but) on their horse backes, as in the Church, whom for my part I can easily beleeue.

3. They haue a seale of perdition vpon them, whosoeuer forsake carelesly the assemblies of Gods people here in earth, they shall certainely bee seperated from them, when too late they shal wish they had been wiser then to haue accounted their wayes fooliſh. *Let vs not forsake our fellowship as the manner of some is*, saith the holy Apostle. Heb. 10. 25

Why what danger is there now and then to keepe from Church, I hope we may bee good Christians for all that? The Apostle tells vs a reason, becauſe
Verſe. 39. *this is a with-drawing of our ſelues to perdition*. It is to walke in the high waye to deſtruction. And indeede what other can ſuch ſworne enimies of Chriſt looke for, when cold Chriſtians are ſent away with ſuch colde comforte euen from the dooing of thoſe duties, which the other eyther neglect or contemne? for if the Lord threatneth his people, that although they might ſerue him in ſome outward ſeemely ſorte, yet if they *did*
Deut. 28. 47. *it not with cheerefulneſſe, and a good heart, they ſhould ſerue their enemies*: if ſuch ſhall bee ſent away with a curſſe on their heads, can ſuch as will neither haue *part nor fellowſhip in this buſineſſe*, euer looke to bee heyres of bleſſing? Let them *repent therefore of theſe their wickedneſſe, and praye GOD, that if it bee poſſible, the thought of their hearts may bee forgiuen them.*

Laſtly, what paines takeſt thou here

here but for thine owne profit? thinke not that thy godlineſſe beneſiteth GOD, but thy owne ſelfe: as thy Atheiſme hurteth not him but thy owne ſoule. Thou hereby bringeſt thy ſelfe where thou mayeſt beholde the face of thy GOD, whereby thy paines is plentifully returned with recompence. This face of God when it was yet vayled, did ſo draw the hearts of ancient beleeuers, that neither diſtance of place, nor difficultie of way, nor tediouſneſſe of weather, nor weakneſſe or wearineſſe of body could with-holde them from the beholding of in the place where hee had put his name.

Thy paines in religion profiteth thy ſelfe, not God.

And is the ſight of the face of the Lord ſo happilye vncouered in our Miniſterie, not worth the paines of looking vpon? thy paines in this behalfe may entitle thee to all the priuiledges of Gods people before mentioned. And if thoſe were not inough for thee, yet the God whom thou ſeekeſt (if thou ſo ſeeke him as hee is found of thee) hee is liberall and louing inough to make thy cup to runne

ouer aboundantly aboue all that wee haue ſpoken or can thinke, and though all thy ſeruice is but dutie and farre vnder that, yet the LORD will not take thy labour for naught. Hee challengeth the ſeruants in his Temple, whether euer any of them
Malac. 1. 10 did ſo much as open the doores, or kindle a fire for ſacrifice freely and without wages; no hee allowed them liberallye for ſuch vnder-ſeruices. How then may wee thinke will hee requite ſuch as are continually about him in his eye, and ſtill behold his face in the preſence-Chamber of his Church?

The latter ſorte, which is alſo the laſt of which wee propounded to ſpeake, are timerous and fearefull Chriſtians, who thinke it better ſleeping in a ſound skinne, then in a ſound conſcience: and becauſe this diligent frequenting of the Church, which we call them vnto, is not without ſome re-
Ob. proche among the prophane and wicked of the world: they are lothe to pull their warme hands out of their boſome to ſette to this Ploughe.

They

They will not in *such a way as men coũt heresie*; or *Præcisenes* serue the God of their fathers, they will keepe an euen course and a good report while they haue it, and Sermon-gadders, and Sermon-mongers they will not bee counted. Timerous & fearfull protestants

Anſ. Weerevnto I anſwer that as it is not amiſſe to caſt our coſtes aforehand, yet muſt wee ſo lay our counters as that we deſiſt not from building vpon our foundation: & in caſting theſe coſtes wee cannot ſay that this courſe is exempted from reproch: Nay ſeeing Satans mallice is no whit abated neither in him-ſelfe, nor in his inſtruments, wee affirme that there cannot a childe ſo ſoone be borne into the Church, but the *Dragon ſtandeth before the woman to bee deliuered, to deuoure her childe ſo ſoone as euer it is brought forth:* and if he cannot do that, he caſteth *out of his mouth water like a flood, that ſhe might bee carryed away of the flood.* But yet the comfort is they are the rebukes of of Chriſt, both becauſe they are vttered againſt him: hee accounteth them as againſt himſelf & he helpeth his ſeruants Reu, 12.4. 16. Heb, 11. 26. & cap, 13.13.

to

to beare them, becommeth a porter putting vnder his shoulder, as also disburdeneth no lesse displeasure against thē then if they were done against his own person. And this is rather a matter *of reioycing, to partake of Christs sufferings yea, it is a peece of the blessednesse of Christians to suffer for well doing and to bee railed vppon for Christes sake*: And therefore a Christian must with *Moyses* esteeme these rebukes of Christ his greatest riches, although hee hadde the treasures of a Kingdome before him; else will hee neuer bee able to hold out vnto the end of his saluation: Neuer therefore professe the name of Christ into which thou art baptized, if thou beest ashamed of it before men, neuer professe loue to Christ any longer, if thou canst not indure a word for his sake; neuer professe, so fast to cleaue vnto him that thou wilt rather die with him then deny him, if thou beest affraid of euery damosels speach, putte on *humility* of heart that thou maist bee contented with abasement for his sake; that if any *Michal* shall mocke thee in thy reioycing before the Lord thou

1 Pet, 4. 13. 14. & 2.

Meanes against the former feare.

thou maiſt reſolue that thou wilt yet bee more vilde; indure more laſhes of the tongue, and more ſorrowes then ſoe, if GOD call thee vnto it, rather then miſſe of ſuch comfortes and matter of true ioy as before the Lord thou maiſt meete withall. And pray for courage and reſolution to hold thee on, vndaunted in thy godly courſe. And ſeeing thou maiſt bee bolde ſo long as thou haſte a good cauſe and a good conſcience, putte on the ſpirit of that worthy *Nehemiah*. When hee had a prophecy (though a falſe one) that if hee did not take the Temple for his ſanctuary that night, the enemies would come and ſlay him: his anſwer was: *ſhoulde ſuch a man as I flee? who is hee that beeing as I am would goe into the Temple to liue? I will not goe in.* So ſhould ſuch a man as I who profeſſe the Ghoſpel, who haue giuen my name to Chriſt, who knowe the Commaundement of GOD, and that this is the beaten way to heauen; troden by all ſuch feete as euer walked in faith and obedience; ſhould ſuch a one as I forſake the aſſemblyes

Nehem. 6. 10. 11.

of

of Gods people? And that for the blasts of such as are of satans sinogogue: If it stood vppon my whole estate, my liberty, and losse of life it selfe, I would not doe it. I know whatsoeuer men accoumpt of mee whose corrupt iudgements would condemn euen the innocency of Christ him-selfe if hee liued againe vpon the earth, if hee should bee dilligent at Sermons, yet seeing ỳ Lord hath honoured mee so highly as to become one of his houshold; and seeing his word doth iustifie my waies & my dilligence in his house, I am at a poynt, I care not what man can say, I feare nothing hee can doe against me. I haue a soule to saue, I must looke to that.

Reioyce that others inioy these liberties with vs.

3. *Vse.* If our hearts delight be in these assemblies, then wee cannot but breake out into the praise of God where euer we see these ordinances established: we cannot but reioyce when others inioy them with vs as beeing the meanes by *which men are redeemed vnto God, and made Kinges and Priestes vnto him.* If *Dauid* were aliue againe he would lead vs ioifully to Church. Of whom we neuer read that he danced but before the

Arke

Arke. The Communion of Saints cannot but cauſe and raize our hearty reioycing for the greateſt good which can befall the Church.

Now what is ẏ greateſt bleſſednesſe that God him-ſelfe can either promiſe or performe to the ſonnes of men liuing in earth? ſurely euen this *to ſet his tabernacle amongſt men, to dwell with them, & become their God.* This is the knitting vppe of all his mercies. Leu, 26. 11. 12.

But what ſpeake I of the Saints vpon earth, ſeeing the Saints in heauen make it the matter of their heauenly ſonges, that out of all kindreds and tongues, and people, and nations, men are redeemed vnto God. Doſt thou ſee the *deſolate haue children* as well as the *maryed wife*? Doſt thou ſee the *truth of the church inlarged*? ſeeſt thou ẏ *coũtries of hir habitatiõ ſpred out*? Perceiueſt ẏ the *increaſe* of her *on the right hand and on the left*? Examine here whether thy heart breaketh forth into holy reioycings, in that the barres are put into the rings of the Arke, whereby the glory of the Lord, after a ſort walketh amongſt his people; in that heauen is filling a- Reu, 5. 9. Eſa, 54. 1. 2.

pace

pace, by the accompliſhing of ỳ number of the elect, & in ỳ the comming of Ieſus Chriſt haſtneth for the final redemption of his body. Til thou findeſt this ỳ haſt not found that affectiō of the Prophet heere commended vnto thee.

2. The truth of this affection will make vs call others to haue their parts with vs in theſe priuiledges. The Prophet *Dauid* though he was a King yet became ſuch an humble companion of all them that feared the Lord, that hee thought it no diſgrace to bee called by his people to ỳ Tabernacle. Some great Kings would haue thought it no great pollicy to haue giuen anſwer to ſuch popular motions: or if hee had ſeene his people go, it were ynough as for himſelfe he might haue greater matters in hand. But oh how doth religion beate downe high conceits! And maketh euen Kings take the Kingdome of God like little children? *Dauid* diſdained not, but reioiced when they ſaid to him *Come let vs go to the houſe of the Lord.* He loſt no honor; no it was his trueſt honor in the eies of God, and hearts of his people; ỳ he gaue them contentmēt and incouragement, in ſuch an honora-

Call others herevnto

Pſal. 122. 1.

ble

ble motion as ȳ was. Faith in the heart will not ſo retire it ſelfe, but it will bee kindling, & calling on others: whence it is that we read in ſo many places of the Prophets, ȳ when people are conuerted to the faith, theſe voices ſhould be ſoũded from thẽ. *Vp let vs go & pray before the Lord & ſeek the Lord of hoaſts; I wil go alſo:* And, *vp let vs go to the mountaine of the Lord, to the houſe of the God of* Iacob *& he wil teach vs his waies, and wee wil walk in his paths:* but eſpecially it forceth vs to bring our own families carefully to ȳ place of worſhip, as thoſe for whom we muſt bee more countable: it bringeth vs to ȳ holy reſolution of *Ioſhua:* that although none wil ioin with vs in ſuch waies; let them at their perill do as ſeemeth them good: our ſelues and our houſholds wil ſerue the Lord.

Zach, 8, 21. Iſay, 2. 3. Micca, 4. 1.

Eſpecially their owne family.

Ioſh, 24. 15.

Vſe. 4. If our chief delight be in the aſſemblies of Gods people, then wee cannot but prefer a meane outward eſtate with the fruition of the exerciſes of religion before a wealthy and glorious conditiõ in the want of them: as our Prophet here preferred the meaneſt office, euen of doore-keepers, who were to be firſt, & laſt in ȳ tabernacle, before a glorious

A meane eſtate with theſe liberties to bee preferred before a better without them.

a glorious and easie life in the Pallaces of the mighty in which hee should bee deteyned from the places of Gods worship. Euen so whosoeuer would carry such an heart as *Dauid* (who was a man according vnto the Lords owne heart) must esteeme of a poore life vnder a powerfull Ministry, more happy and comfortable, then a rich condition in places of ignorance, which want the meanes of their spiritual consolation. *Moyses* was of this minde he would rather suffer (aduersity, want, reproch,) with the people of GOD, then inioy the treasures of *Egypt* by forsaking them.

Heb, 11. It was also alwaies a mark of ỹ people of God to follow him into the places of his true worshippe, where hee went before. If in *Shiloh*, if in *Ierusalem*; thither do *all the Tribes repaire, euen such as set their face to seeke the Lord.* But how do men proclaime that this reioycing neuer entred into their hearts, who with *Lot* chuse *Sodom* before *Canaan*, and delight rather in the Mountains of *Samaria* then in *Sion* hil which indeed is the fruitfull part of the earth?

2 Chro, 11. 16.

Some

Some chooſe habitations for friends, ayre, waters, woods, walkes, fruitfulneſſe, and ſome other ſpeciall commodities, and hence commend them and there ſeate themſelues and ſet downe their ſtaffe, although Gods habitation be not there: the Miniſtrie is counted as an hang-by: if that bee there they count it neuer the better; if it be abſent it is neuer a whit the worſe, they care but a little too liue in the common ayre of Gods people, the familiaritie of Gods friends, the pleaſures of Gods houſe, the ſweete fruites of the ſpirit of God are not enquired after, nor taſted. Others retaine to atheiſts, ſcorners, papiſts, ſwearers, and if *Peter* can warme himſelfe ſtill by *Caiphas* fire hee can ſweare and forſweare as they doe. They neuer aske themſelues that queſtion which the Lord asked *Eliah, What dooſt thou here Eliah?* they ſay not, what doe I here in this caue? this is not a place where I ſhould bee, to liue *where the Diuell dwelleth*, or where God dwelleth not: they heare not the Lords voyce ſpeaking to them as vnto *Eliah. Vp, get thee to* Sarepta, *I haue appointed there*

1. King. 19. 9.

Reu. 2. 13.

1. Kin. 17. 9

ane to feed thee: They are well content to be fed by Rauens ſtill. But here is a fearefull brand vpon ſuch who are contented to make exchange of heauen for earth, and haue reſolued that they will be gainers in the world, though it bee to the loſſe of their ſoules. Whoſoeuer therfore thou art, ý haſt any care of thy ſoule; neuer liue if it be poſſible vnder an idoll, but where the worde is ſetled, and the miniſtery duly diſcharged. Buy the truth whatſoeuer it coſt, yea with the loſſe of many outward things: be a meanes to thy abilitie to procure a ſtanding Miniſtry to thy ſelfe & thine: what comfort couldſt thou haue to liue and dwell in a wilderneſſe among wild beaſts, without men, or other comforts, in ſuch a barren ſoile as no paines can ouer-come the inuincible ſtifneſſe of the ground? and yet in ſuch a place were it more comfortable for a godly heart to liue, then amongſt a wicked people wanting meanes of grace and inſtruction. And if thou wouldſt dwell in the louelieſt part of the earth; chooſe ſuch a place as which the Lord hath choſen to manifeſt his preſence in, and where-

wherein hee hath set his tabernacle. The tribe of *Beniamin* was of all the tribes the *beloued of the Lord*, as *Beniamin* himselfe was the deerest to his father. But wherein consisted this loueliness? in this, that the Lord *should dwell betweene his shoulders*. In which *Metaphor* the whole possession of *Beniamin* is compared to a body; and the metropolitane, which was *Ierusalem*, to the head set betweene two shoulders, in which the Lord delighted to dwell. If any place therefore in earth should draw our affections aboue others, it is that in which the Lord in his ordinances draweth neerest vnto vs: and if our delights bee in the places where the Lord delighteth not to shew the presence of his grace, our affections come short of our example here commended vnto vs. The face of God shining in his ordinance must be our *Naomi*, to which we must say, *Where thou goest I will go, and where thou dwellest I will dwell.*

Deu. 33. 12
Gen. 44. 20

Ruth. 1. 16

FINIS.